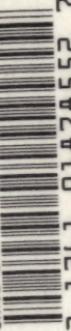


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Humanity Its Destiny and The Means To Attain It

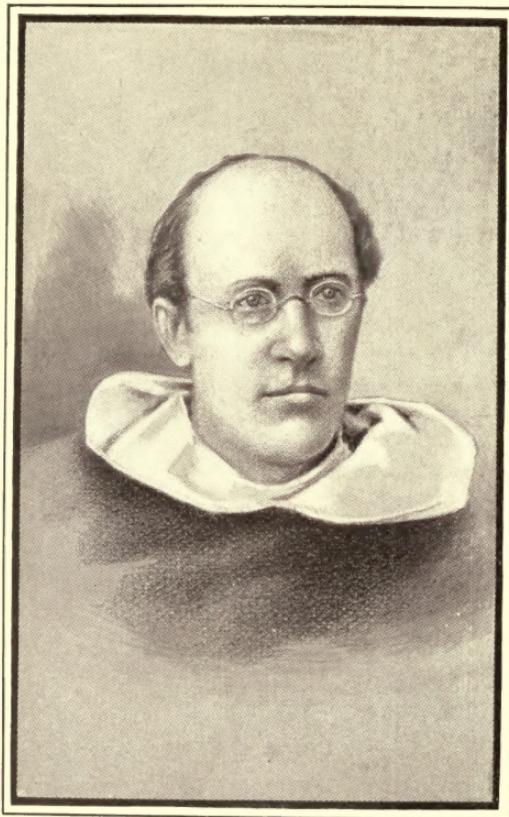


DENIFLE - BROSSART



Ca d'Anio

R. T. Burke P.S.B.



P. HENRY DENIFLE, O.P.

HUMANITY

*ITS DESTINY AND THE
MEANS TO ATTAIN IT*

A SERIES OF DISCOURSES

BY THE

REV. FATHER HENRY DENIFLE, O. P.

Sub-archivist of the Apostolic See

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY THE

VERY REV. FERDINAND BROSSART, V. G.

of Covington, Ky.

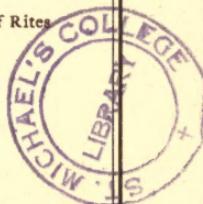
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PREFACE OF THE TRANSLATOR

THE destructive work of the French Revolution of 1789 is still going on. There exists in the world to-day a strong organization that considers the work of the Revolution incomplete as long as there are people in the world who believe in the supernatural and the eternal destiny of man, and as long as the Church of God, founded for the purpose of leading humanity to its last end, is not annihilated. This organization hates God and His commandments, and it is the sworn and everlasting enemy of the Church of God, which represents the demands of God upon the world as unchangeable and absolute. The inculcation of God's holy law is her divine mission — the diffusion of virtue, which is vastly more needed in the world than worldly knowledge, which certain ones constantly proclaim as the panacea of all evil. The formation of men of character is more important than men of so-called intellectual culture, whose hearts are estranged from God through ignorance of His holy laws and of man's relation to Him.

The Catholic Church is the foremost religious body

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in the world—and always has been—devoted to the enlargement of knowledge, but she insists, at the same time, upon the greater necessity of the practice of those virtues which are in keeping with man's true dignity—the vocation to a spiritual life and the fulfilment of his threefold duty—his duty to God, his duty to his neighbor and to society, and his duty to himself.

The true dignity of man and the means to attain and to sustain it is scarcely anywhere else more succinctly and profoundly considered and defended with more cogent philosophical and theological reasons than in the following discourses of the great son of St. Dominic—Father Denifle,—which he delivered in the Cathedral of Gratz, in Austria, at a time when he was still a young but a most brilliant lector of the Dominican house of studies in that city, in the year 1872, and which he carefully revised in later years.

The thoughts and ideas of great minds should be preserved and disseminated by all means available, and, therefore, with many others, I deem it not only proper but a real benefit to our English-speaking Catholics and all truth-loving non-Catholics to clothe these terse and profoundly philosophical and theological thoughts of the great scholar and noble Dominican—Father Denifle—upon the most important subject that can possibly interest man and humanity—in an English dress. All who are anxious to know the relation between God and man, between the Church

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and the State, the subordination of the one to the other, and the complete harmony that should exist between both, will find a full explanation in these pages, given by one who fearlessly and without reserve approaches the question and gives the proper and only true solution as it exists in the design of Him who is the author of both.

Out of profound respect for the author I have adhered closely to his mode of expression, in order to give as correctly as possible his own weighty ideas, especially so since it is well known that many of the thoughts contained herein were afterwards utilized and dilated upon by the late and learned Pope Leo XIII, in some of his magnificent Encyclicals.

The stupendous knowledge, the historical, philosophical and theological rectitude of the author of these discourses, merited for him and obtained a much deserved acknowledgment from the greatest universities and learned societies of the scholarly world. While on his way to England to receive the honorary doctorate from the university of Cambridge, he died suddenly on June 10, 1905, at Munich, in his sixty-first year. His premature death was an irreparable loss, not only to the great Dominican order, whose most loyal son he ever was, and to the Catholic Church in general, but to the world at large, to every sincere and learned searcher after truth.

May these his discourses, now given in the English

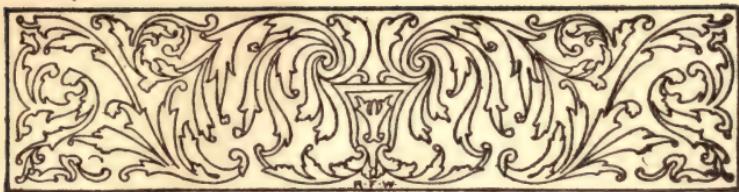
P r e f a c e

language, prove to many a great store of solid and convincing truths, and lead them to make all possible efforts to attain their destiny — peace and happiness for time and eternity.

FERDINAND BROSSART.

COVINGTON, KY.,
Feast of the Ascension of our Lord,
May 20, 1909.





THE FIRST DISCOURSE

THE NATURAL RELATION OF MAN TO GOD

“They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” — Jer. II, 13.

THREE are moments in the human life in which the individual, even amidst the greatest joys, becomes serious and reflective, and were he to ask: Why is this? he probably would find no answer, but instead thereof a feeling of anxiety would come over him and trouble his soul.

That which happens in the life of the individual is experienced likewise by humanity in general. There are moments, aye, great periods, in which not only the individual but the human family is sadly disposed and questions itself seriously and thoughtfully: Why is this thus? — And there are few who find an answer to the question.

Man is to-day again in such a mood. The present state of society is far from being that of a pleasant one. Men in general are very seriously disposed.

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Peace, which should animate the hearts of individuals and unite them collectively, they do not possess. Society is divided. Citizens are opposed to citizens; families are separated; State is opposed to State and in the very inner circles of States there is disunion and discord. The world is not insensible to this sad condition and though otherwise it may lack in seriousness, still it is not lacking in this to-day and it puts the question very anxiously to itself: Whence comes this division? Whence this discord and the painful cry which is heard everywhere? What is really the cause of the distress and ill-fortune which prevail to-day?

The priest of God, the messenger of divine truth, is commissioned to step onto the watch-tower of the age and to cry out with the prophet of old: "I am upon the watch-tower of the Lord, standing continually by day, and I am upon my ward, standing whole nights." (Isai. XXI, 8.) He shall give answer to the faithful who pass below asking: "Watchman, what of the night?" (Ibid. II, 11.) Though not all, still a large portion of society, and at least you, beloved Christians, will seek from the priest an explanation of the cause of the misery and of the decline of the present society.

God Himself supplies the answer by the lips of the prophet: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to them-

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selves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

This is the only correct answer to the present state of society. It contains within itself the sin of the age — *apostasy from God*. It must be apparent to the close observer of the age, that the character of the present day is not merely religious indifference — those days are past. The main effort of our age tends toward the destruction of the religious faith — the de-christianization of society. "Look wherever you may," said Pope Pius IX, "look to the East or to the West, to the North or to the South, consider the ruling powers of society and tell me whether they have not apostatized from religion? (See Pius X, Encycl. on Christian Instruction. Also Father Albert M. Weiss, The religious Dogma, n. I, The religious quest.)

The above quoted words of the prophet contain also the answer to the question concerning the cause of the affliction of society — for apostasy from God is the real cause.

If this be true, then the only remedy consists in the return of man to God. But, as we will see later on in our discourses, return to God means nothing else than return to the Catholic Church. If, therefore, we desire to regain peace, which has been lost; if happiness and well-being are again to attend society, then we must face about and abandon the

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declivitous path upon which we are moving; we must become religious once more. But *the Catholic Church is the Religion*. As the supernatural does not destroy the natural, but rather presupposes it, so the Catholic Church, though a supernatural religion, does not annul the natural religion, but embraces it as a necessary supposition and a foundation. Therefore, before we consider the first, we must clearly understand in what relation man and the whole of humanity stand to God. The exposition of this relation will form the subject of our first discourse.

I. Religion — The Natural Consequence of the Existence of God

There is a God. — The universe is not a planless whole, it is rather a magnificent system of forces and of motions which point positively to a creative and a directing will of a first and an uncreated cause — which we call God. The planets traverse their course with an astonishing regularity; their motions are subject to unchangeable laws. But laws cannot exist without a law-giver; and the supreme law-giver is only found, by every true philosopher as well as by every true religion — *in God*.

As the heavenly bodies pursue their courses according to fixed laws and the order of the universe

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excludes every idea of change, so does man find within himself a law, which always and everywhere exerts itself in every man, and is deeply buried within the heart of man, so that even malice fails to extinguish it. But, whereas the whole of nature necessarily obeys the laws determined by God, man alone is free either to conform to the law prescribed for him — the moral law — or to transgress it.

This moral law contains those unchangeable truths which define the essential relation between man and God, the mutual relations among men themselves, and create order in the individual himself. As the unchangeable laws of nature establish the physical order of the universe, so do these truths likewise form the sustaining foundation of the moral order of the world. Man finds them existing within himself without himself, independently of himself, as soon as he attains the use of reason.

Whence comes this law? Who has written it so indelibly upon our conscience? There is but one correct answer to this question, and that is given by the Apostle of the nations: "Of God, and by God, and in God are all things." (Rom. XI, 36.)

Yes, Brethren, there is a God! The whole of antiquity, with all its searchers after truth, testifies to this truth, and heaven and earth, with all who have lived therein, give testimony thereof. If the works of God and His influence upon earth were not

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an open book before us we might never know of His existence: but mankind is absolutely convinced of His existence because it sees His works.

There is a God! And what follows from this? This is the great question of the age. There are comparatively few who deny the existence of God and only "the fool says in his heart: There is no God." (Ps. XIII, 1.) But great is the number of those who fail to draw the proper conclusion from this truth; who fail to ask themselves: If there is a God, what is my relation to Him? And yet, back of every question of the day stands ever the one question: What is the relation of the individual man, and that of the entire human race, to God? This question is therefore of the greatest importance.

What the spring is to the stream—God is to His creature. What the mother is to the child, God is to man. Aye more, the relation of man to God is unique. The spring of itself is not the source of the stream, nor is the mother of herself the cause of the child, both have over and above themselves a higher cause, but God is without a cause, of Himself — the first cause of man. All things are inasmuch as they receive from Him their being, and all things only continue to be inasmuch as their being is continued by Him. The whole human race and all nature are dependent on God and God is their real and exclusive owner.

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In the acknowledgment of this truth mankind in general was one and united, for, wherein else has the religion of mankind its first foundation than in the consciousness of its dependence upon God? From this feeling arises the necessity and tendency towards intercourse with God, union with Him, and this is established by religion. History therefore presents no people without a religion, without its temples, its altars and its priests. "If you travel the world over," says Plutarch (Adv. Colot. c. 31), the pagan author, "you will find communities without literature, without a king, without coins, without theaters, without schools, but never will you find one, nor has any ever been found without a temple nor without God. No, there is no people which does not practice the duty of prayer . . . which does not offer gifts and sacrifices, be it to obtain favors or to avert evils that are impending. I maintain that it is easier to build a city in the air than to found and maintain a community without religious faith." Religion is a necessity, a law of humanity, just because humanity feels itself dependent in all things on a higher being, upon God.

This religious need was no less felt in the days of paganism than in the days of Christianity. (See Christ. Tesch. *Der Gottesbegriff*.) Rome was the metropolis of the ancient world, but it was also the metropolis of the deities. It believed that to

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religion it owed its supremacy over the world and it considered the enemies of religion the enemies of the empire, and if the pagan Cæsars antagonized Christian religion and sought to exterminate it, it was only done because to them the religion of the State seemed endangered by the Christian religion. The persecution of Christians was in their eyes no conflict against religion in general. “Destroy the atheists!” cried the people at the death of St. Polycarp — so deeply was it convinced of the existence of a higher being which exercised its power over the universe.

II. The Apostasy from God — the Curse of our Age

This great truth, maintained by all the past centuries, our present age seems to have forgotten. Our contemporaries, to a great extent, seem to have lost the consciousness of their dependence upon God, and consequently the need of intercourse and union with God. Man longs for independence, even of a higher being; he no longer wishes to serve, he wishes to “be like unto God.”

The State and society likewise wish to be independent of a higher being. They, too, wish to be “like unto God.” The sciences and the arts have deserted the service of God, and have given themselves over to the services of infidelity and have

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abandoned the mother who reared them — Religion. For more than a century minds have arisen in France, Germany and Italy, strong minds, which, casting away the reins of religion and faith, have changed God into nature and nature into God. With the rejection of faith in a supernatural and personal God they have cast overboard faith in personal immortality of the soul and, with it all, the entire relation of the dependence of man on God. The danger which resulted from their pernicious doctrines to people and society was alas! recognized too late. Scientists and philosophers, who knew how to clothe their false doctrines in attractive garments, were regarded as an exclusive circle rigidly separated from the people, but to-day it is most evident that their systems have left upon the individual minds, as well as upon the masses of society, deep traces; their systems have disappeared, it is true, and have made room for others, as the dream of a sick person passes away, but their after effects have remained like a pestilential odor in the intellectual atmosphere.

Man has abandoned his God, completely forgotten Him, and wishes to be his own master, and why? His pretense is to preserve his moral and human dignity. His supreme good consists in being man and his highest aim is liberty of conscience.

(a) The first pretense: The preservation of the moral dignity of man.

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The “modern” State turns its back upon God. It ignores God and wishes to be its own master. And why? Because it wishes to maintain its own dignity. And, pray, what is this dignity? A dignity which those philosophers claimed for society, who, within the bounds of paganism, contributed towards its moral ruin, I mean the Stoicks.¹ The “modern” State refuses to acknowledge any superior above itself. It claims to be God, the supreme norm and source of all right, from which all right flows to the subject and the first commandment of this God is: Thou shalt obey my laws, be they bad or good. The voice of your conscience should be but the reflex of my own.

Let us now examine whether either the individual or the entire community maintain their moral dignity through apostasy from God, and whether reli-

¹ The whole of paganism did not maintain this opinion. Though its two greatest philosophers — Plato and Aristoteles — considered the State as the highest aim, as it were, as the object of man’s existence and in which the individual is only measured by what benefit he is to the whole, yet, on the other hand, they recognized, far above the State, the Deity, upon which heaven and earth depend and which they considered actively engaged in things mundane. What remained to them a closed book, and was only revealed through Christianity, was the exact relation of both, of God and the world. Many of our age are not in the least concerned about this relation, because in their eyes God does not exist. They are the pupils of Hegel who taught them “that the State is the divine will — the real and actual God.” (*Works*, VIII, 334.) A man who permitted such blasphemy to escape from his lips would not have dared attend the schools of the philosophers mentioned above.

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gion really destroys the dignity of man? What does really take place in the man in whom the union between himself and God is severed? Is his condition not that of the braggart who declared, "I will not serve." (Jer. II, 20.)

When man has once cast off the divine yoke and torn asunder the bonds which unite him to God, then something frightful takes place in his soul, as was well said by a deep thinker, who afterwards discovered this to his own detriment. (De La Mennais.) Because no longer bound by her principle of life which binds the soul to God — around Whom the spirit world moves, as does the physical around the sun — she becomes depressed, in a manner, by her own weight and she sinks to the very depth; and she sinks and continues to sink and sinks deeper and deeper, and sinks incessantly. Tortured by an insatiable longing and an unquenchable thirst after life, she only snatches at fleeing and immaterial shadows of her own fancy. Her superior faculties and powers become languid and seem to lie in a deep sleep; the mysterious powers of the soul, those unchangeable truths which control the moral order of the world, lose all their force for her. And now there begins in man the real process of destruction. His soul hungers and he has no food for her; his soul thirsts and he has no drink to give her. What shall he do? Where shall he begin? Will he now be

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able to save his moral and human dignity? To rise, to keep himself aloft, for this courage and strength are required, for, as in the physical order so also in the moral order of the world, fallen man can only rise by means of the exertion of power. And since man was not born to command, but to serve, he will, after shaking off the tender and divine yoke, become a prey to his lust and evil passions. But as soon as the evil spirits reign in the bosom of man, and his passions are unchained, his human dignity is gone and his freedom of conscience is at an end. Passions lead to despotism, to tyranny. "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin." (John VIII, 34.) We are no longer masters of ourselves, but we are in the power of sin. "Sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. VII, 17.) It is this that then governs us, and not reason nor the law of God written in our hearts. Aye, it is a maxim founded on experience that "a free man is only the religious man." Religion seems to curtail the liberty of man since it commands him to curb his passions; but as soon as man permits himself to be guided by those unchangeable principles which partake of the unchangeableness of the eternal law, then he feels that he *is free*, and that the word of the Lord is true: "Veritas vos liberabit" — the truth will make you free. (John VIII, 32.)

The condition of a man separated from God,

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which we have just described, is only a faint picture of the state of an entire people which has lost the faith. This condition is a frightful one! there can scarcely be a greater calamity that could befall a nation. Could it possibly be a state of serious disturbance in material matters, when commerce and industry are at a standstill? But, as the individual does not live by bread alone, neither does the whole community. There are higher interests than the material; the spiritual ranks far above the corporal, and even material prosperity is often restored after a few decades of years. No, this is not the greatest calamity that can befall a nation.

Could it possibly be war or famine or pest? True, we daily pray to be delivered from these evils. In war a nation is depressed by seeing the blood of its sons spilt upon the battle-field, but often after dreadful wars people rise with renewed power and energy, such as it scarcely dreamed of before the war. And if the cruelties and ravages of war did not open the eyes of a nation, was this not often done by famine and pest? Therefore, these are not the greatest calamities that can befall a nation.

Could it possibly be the horrors of a revolution? At first thought it would seem so. "Revolution," says the great philosopher and political writer, Balmes (Mixed writings, III, 44), "convulses all things that were upright. Its course is marked by

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blood and ruin. It loosens all social and domestic bonds. It tears asunder those of the State. It accustoms men to revolt, it destroys discipline in the army, disseminates everywhere the germs of immorality, and, finally, casts States into most frightful chaotic conditions. It brings on horrible days for State and people, for families and individuals. But does not revolution also bring with it, in its dreadful consequences, the means of salvation? Most fearful calamities oftentimes bring nations as well as individuals to their senses, especially if they are self-inflicted, and after revolutionary times people are affrighted at its very name, as a sign of every imaginable horror, and not the least of its results is oftentimes the return of the people to God. Frightful as revolutions really are — they are not the greatest calamities of a people.

And were all the evils described above to come upon a nation at once, even all these combined would not be its greatest calamity. There is an evil more frightful still — because it is the foundation and root of every evil. When the religious faith of a nation is undermined and its moral principles are perverted; when a people will acknowledge no other rights above human rights and ignores the rights of God, because the living faith in Him has long ago vanished from the hearts of the individuals; when its whole effort and aim is only directed toward

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the enjoyment of the present life, and the thought of a future life and of a reward in Eternity is dreaded as a frightful phantom; when in consequence of this minds are weakened through sensual pleasures; when the most disgraceful vices are deified and the sciences and arts forget themselves and dishonor their mission; when egoism takes the place of virtue and social and domestic bonds are loosened and torn asunder—then the greatest possible calamity, that can be imagined, has befallen a people.

When the individual ceases to think that he depends upon God in his actions, then he sinks beneath the animal and feels to his own destruction a weight, of which he was not aware as long as he was united to God, his true center. But when a people, and mankind in general, elevate themselves above God and simply ignore Him, because He is opposed to their wrong-doings, when they force themselves away from their center, their fall is most deplorable, because mankind in general surpasses the individual. When in silence we pass over the decay of art, of literature and of science, which necessarily marks such a period, does not everything appear in such society to be enervated, sickly, decrepit and most frail? Where then will you find the great men, where the noble characters who can possibly arise from such bottomless mire? Cowardice, craftiness, and servile flattery usurp the place of noble senti-

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ments and mental slavery replaces a much lauded liberty. Tacitus bears witness to this when he says: "Romae ruere in servitium consules, patres, eques." The consuls, senators and nobles of Rome are given to despicable servitude. (An. I, 7.) Was not the fifth century, after Christ, witness of such a tragedy, and does not our own age display a similar character? Where will you find in such souls, in such a people, moral or human dignity?

Brethren! A striking truth confirms this consideration in a very remarkable manner. What is character? I am of the opinion that it is in man and humanity what system is in science. The value and unity of a scientific system rest upon the value and unity and stability of the principles upon which the scientific system is constructed. A system ought to represent a well ordered connection of kindred sciences as a unit, but this is only possible if the several sciences have principles in common as a basis. If these principles and truths are false, then also is the science derived from them a false science, and the system composed of them will appear a mere phantom, as soon as it is submitted to a test of reality and truth. Our very age confirms this. Of all philosophical systems invented during the past century, not one has stood the test; they all collapsed and their schools are abandoned. A sign that they were only aerial structures.

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Now, what is character in man? Is it not subject to the same requirements? Character presents also in the moral life of man a unity of views and convictions; it is the uniform expression of his whole moral life, which, like a system, rests upon certain principles, which determine the unity just mentioned. And as a system stands or falls with the scientific principles, so also does the strength or weakness of a character lie in the moral principles. And what kind of principles are these? They are those superior truths, which man independently of himself, finds even at the first use of his reason within himself, which emanate from that eternal and unchangeable law which is God Himself. If man permits himself to be directed in his actions by these immutable principles, then his character will assume that stability and inner unity which even in the strife under unfavorable circumstances will be victorious. He has ceased to be a mere force of impression and imagination; he has become a man, for it is these principles which give him power. His firmness of will is not broken by anything, it triumphs over every opposition; it is to-day what it was yesterday and will be to-morrow, for the principles from which it receives its strength remain ever true and the same, as God's law is ever true and unchangeable. But if man in his actions and thoughts departs from these eternal principles, if he makes for himself his

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own laws, in contradiction to the eternal laws of God, then he, too, is moved from his own center; he loses his interior unity and he is like a leaky ship without helm or rudder, tossed to and fro upon the ceaseless ocean of this world. The eternal truths are replaced by passions and evil desires, which are incapable of forming any laws, for they aim to escape every law. But if the condition of a man void of character is a lamentable one, then that of society without character is worse. Men during past centuries have attempted to teach that there is a twofold morality, a public and a civil one, a different law of morality for those who govern and for those who are governed; that the State as such and the government are not subject to the moral law, but beyond its reach. (Machiavelli, *Principe* c. 15, 18, and Hegel's *Works*, VIII, 425.) Do you understand what this means? If I am not mistaken, it means simply this that the State and its government have a different aim from that of the individual; that humanity in general has a different God from the one of the individual. (Even Aristoteles refutes this, saying: "The individual man and mankind in general, as a society, have the same aim." *Eth. Nic.* I, 1, and *Pol. VII*, 15.) But indeed, the "modern" State is in itself the divine will, as has been asserted, and therefore it is its own aim; it has its own laws; it is not in need of the natural moral law, for this is

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but a reflection of the divine light within us, an innate knowledge of the divine law which the “modern” State does not recognize. But what is the consequence of this? In the State and in society the same symptoms are visible which are discernible in the man who has abandoned God and His law. The State and society are devoid of character; they lose their dignity and inner unity. As soon as you establish as a higher principle of the State the right to act as present utility requires, then politics become selfish, mere arbitrariness becomes law; the oath is no longer regarded as inviolate; marriage is no longer sacred; honesty descends to shame and disgrace, and venality will beget fortune. Will the “modern” State that acts in such a manner attain its aim? How can it attain unity in others and order when it no longer rests upon those pillars which support the great moral order of the world? Without religion nothing is firm, neither right nor justice. Upon it rests the foundation of all domestic and civil order.¹ Even pagans considered this a rational truth. To them religion was the main affair of the State (Aristoteles Pol. VII, 8) and Plutarch (Adv. Colot. c. 31)

¹ Pius IX, (in his Encycl. of Dem. 8, 1864) and Leo XIII (in Encycl. of June 29, 1881, on the origin of civil power) beg the rulers of the world to consider that laws will never possess such a power that they, of themselves, can maintain the State. This power will be fruitless, if a sense of duty does not determine men and salutary fear of God does not direct them. But this is mainly accomplished by religion.

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was of the opinion that the State is stronger through the power of religion than by the strength of its fortifications. And where, pray, will the State find protection after having been foolhardy enough to reject the commandments of God and God Himself? "Mentita est iniquitas sibi." (Ps. XXVI, 12.) Iniquity hath lied to itself. True, but is not that other saying of Holy Writ true also: "Per quae peccat quis, per haec et torquetur." By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented (Wis. XI, 17). The State devoid of character throws itself, same as man without character, into the power of passions. But passions are not able, even for a moment, to control the government of men. They do not govern, they kill. They do not direct, but destroy. Does this assertion need a proof? Is not our modern age rich in such abhorrent examples? What was the main and real cause of the French revolution of 1793? It was the violation of the supreme moral law, the mainstay of society. Louis XIV recognized for his government no law but personal interest, his own private utility.¹ This alone was the very soul of his actions. But very soon he found that there was no other law binding upon his subjects than their own interests. To the apostasy from God of the ruler followed that of the apostasy from God of the people; to the despotism

¹ Compare note 1 of the sixth discourse, pp. 226, 227.

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of the king followed the revolt of the people. And if to-day we notice revolt raising its head in many places, if it has become a chronic evil of nations, it only proves that the revolt of the subjects against their ruler was preceded by the revolt against God and His holy laws. "Without God and religion," to use the strong expression of St. Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, LV, 4) "rulers and those ruled are nothing but a band of robbers." A nation which has lost its religious faith, for which moral law no longer exists, will not endure a ruler nor order. The ancient world went to pieces through want of character and why? Because, as St. Paul often repeats, the moral law was no longer binding upon it. Our own age stands upon the very brink of perdition for the very same reason. And just there where "modern" culture is focalized, where humanity celebrates its deification, we find this truth mostly realized. Want of character and deterioration of morals go hand in hand, for character is but the uniform expression of moral life, which, if it is not to deteriorate, necessarily presupposes those immutable truths.

Thus we have found, upon another way, a confirmation of our assertion made above, that neither the individual nor human society can possibly save their dignity if they disregard their dependency upon God and His sacred law. And, therefore, the

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complaint made by God, through the lips of His prophet, is well founded: "They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living water, and have dug to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

If all men are dependent upon God in their thoughts and their actions, because He is their creator and we are His creatures, and, therefore, intercourse with God, which religion establishes, is a necessity of man, then religion cannot possibly destroy the dignity of man, simply because it is a law, a necessity of man. On the contrary, it is precisely in the light of religion that man, even in his lower grade, appears great and exalted. Religion does not only direct him to God, who is his end, but it tells him that within himself there is a hidden picture of wonderful beauty and infinite value, which he does not see, it is true, but which is the basis of that deep longing and ardent craving which never leaves him even in his deepest misery, rather, just then becomes most evident. It is the longing after eternal happiness, after the possession of infinite good. Only this longing is worthy of man. Or can any other longing replace this one? Every being exerts some effort; the world does not exist as a dead mass, on the contrary, a stream of motion, of activity and life passes through the universe, and every one of its parts. But whither tends

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the activity of every being? Is it towards itself or towards some inferior being? Most certainly not, for the first would be a rest within itself, consequently, no effort; the latter simply a degradation. Effort — as the word denotes — is directed towards something higher. Can therefore the present life be the real end of human effort? This would be no effort, but a degradation, since the whole of nature is lower than man. This would mean that he, the only free and rational creature of the world, is to be placed beneath unconscious nature.¹ His aim, indeed, must be for something higher than the whole of the present life affords; that interior longing after eternal happiness and eternal life is not a deception, it is necessarily connected with man's nature.

We are not considering here that supernatural happiness to which God, of His own free bounty, elevates us and which we of ourselves can neither desire

¹ How deep man can fall once he emancipates himself from religion, is proven by the legion of materialists. If man is not placed above nature he is absorbed by it. How grandly and morally exalted, compared to these modern philosophers, does the ancient pagan Aristoteles appear when he says that "entire nature endeavors to participate in the eternal and immortal being of the Deity; but since this is not possible to natural things as the equal in number, it is at least as the equal of kind. (*Anima* II, 1.) Does he not also declare of man that he is, in a measure, the end of nature, *i.e.*, that all things around him exist for his sake. (*Phys.* II, 2.) But whatever exists for me, is surely less than myself; it therefore cannot be, because lower than myself, the last end of myself.

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nor attain; but the mere natural light of reason and the natural longing of the heart point to a life which cannot be confined within the narrow limits of the present. The immortality of the soul is likewise a demand of reason and of the heart as much as is the existence of God. Should therefore religion, which enables us to live according to this demand, not also be a requirement of reason and of the heart? For what does religion effect? Does it not direct man towards the eye of Him who surveys all the ways of humanity, towards the hand that guides and directs all, towards the Heart which carries within it for every one of us, even the lowest and humblest, aye, for these above all others, not only love, but which is *Love* itself? And when man is in that painful condition wherein he craves for consolation and strength, when all around him is dark and dreary and life itself becomes a burden, what other means could possibly sustain him in that condition better than religion and the hope of eternal life toward which, by nature, his longing is directed? But if man has lost sight of his creator, if, in consequence of this, his hope of a future life has vanished, and if the last end of existence seems to him to be only a terrestrial one, he will either lead an unhappy life, full of tortures and sufferings, or he will listen to the most pernicious thoughts possible; and, tired of the burden of life, lay hands upon himself in

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suicide.¹ Just because his longing is naturally directed towards something higher than this world, therefore, he can find no satisfaction in this world, even though he be in the very midst of joy or sorrow; but the irrational animal, because without a longing after personal immortality, finds its end in the world and never destroys itself. The longing of our soul, indeed, gives testimony that we cannot have upon earth — where so many sufferings are our lot, and all joys it offers are not capable to satisfy our heart — our aim and end; that to the infinite longing of our soul there must correspond an infinite object, which can be no other than God Himself. Otherwise we, being the end of the end, would be unhappier than inorganic nature itself. Thus religion alone which satisfies the longing of our soul by union with God, exhibits man in his true moral greatness, whereas apostasy from religion destroys the dignity of man.

¹ In the same ratio in which religious faith, either in God or the immortality of the soul, decreases, in the same does the number of suicides increase. Herein does “modernism” also approach the most condemnable of ancient philosophers — the Stoics — who denied personal immortality and approved of suicide. (Cf. Diog. VII, 130. Cicero *De fin.* III, 18, 60.) I am well aware that to-day many find nothing degrading in this and with the author of “The systems of nature” represent suicide, in order to get rid of the burden of life, as something in conformity to nature. But with such men, in whom the moral laws are already so perverted, you can quarrel just as little as you can with those who deny the maxim that the same thing cannot be and not be at the same time.

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(b) The second pretense for apostasy from God: The preservation of the intellectual dignity of man.

Man and the “modern” State abandon God and dependency upon Him for another reason: They wish to preserve their intellectual dignity. Formerly it was the cry: “Liberty of man”; now it is; “Liberty of science.” He who asks, according to our previous explanation, how society could possibly fall so low, will find here somewhat of a solution, though we shall only touch this point hurriedly, since in the course of our discourses we will have to return to it quite frequently.

Since the “modern” State regards itself as the supreme end and supreme source of all right and property, it also claims naturally that all should serve it and be active in promoting its aims; that, therefore, it, and it alone, should guide the education and culture of its children and therefore the children belong primarily to it, rather than to the parents. A religious training and education is to it, a State without God, of no use; religion is to it, at most, only a means to control inferior beings, and this only so long until a stronger police-club than religion can be found. This view of the modern state was long ago advocated by most of the high schools of France, Italy, and Germany. In these the pupils were indoctrinated with scientific systems

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in which there was no room for God, as religious consciousness demands.¹

But, without God there is no religion, and without religion no morals. Now is science possibly a neutral ground which can and may withdraw itself from the benefit of religion? Let us put the question differently: May the scientist, according to our previous explanation, disregard in his experiments God, who is the center of the world, which for him is the field of his knowledge? Most assuredly not. Because, dependent on God in all things, he cannot, unless he wishes to deny the essence of a creature, withdraw himself in his experiments from the dependency upon God. But with this scientists are

¹ With the exception of the Catholic Universities of America, of France, Belgium and Switzerland, there is scarcely a modern established university in which, more or less, professors of a godless, or rather of a tendency inimical to God, are not engaged. Philosophy has passed from Kant's subjectivism to pantheism, from this to materialism and recently again to monism. On the monistic-materialistic evolution theory rests the theory of the whole world. All branches of knowledge must be directed by this fundamental hypothesis. It can readily therefore be understood that all results tend nowise to a better knowledge of God. The "science that assumes nothing" rather demands that nothing be discovered of God, "since the proof of His existence has been definitely demolished." It may easily therefore be explained in connection with this why so few conscientious Catholics, so seldom and under the most peculiar circumstances, receive a call to State universities, excepting of course the theological faculties. The consequence of this religious poisoning of the youth engaged in studies, and, along with it, of the intellects of the State, shows itself only too plainly, even if you disregard Austria and Russia.

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not satisfied, and therefore, let us put the question more pointedly: Can the scientist, if he wishes to experiment without prejudice, can he entirely dispense with God? The greatest and most learned men of all times were religious.¹ Could it possibly be otherwise? Have not the past centuries proven that the deeper the human mind enters into the studies of the universe, the deeper is the knowledge of God attained? This was proven, especially in the past century, by a person of whom a great scientist declared that his name alone reminds one at once that its bearer possessed the knowledge of the age, like a second Aristoteles. (Doellinger: *Universitaeten*, p. 25.) This was Albrecht v. Haller, the

¹ See K. A. Kneller: *Das Christenthum und die Vertreter der neueren Kulturwissenschaft* (Herder, 1904, 2 ed.) who shows precisely how the most prominent discoverers and learned men were either men of faith or religiously inclined. Compare with this the remarks of Chr. Schreiber in: *Philosophical Year-book*, bd. 18 (1905) p. 454-457. Denifle says: If nevertheless faith in God seems less among the learned, this has, without doubt, its main reason in the fact that science has become mainly a means of subsistence. Hereby scientific interest necessarily suffers. If a professorship or higher position is sought, and since its being filled depends on the State and the State is de facto a State without God, therefore the competent applicant, if he wishes to succeed, dare not give evidence of his religious convictions. How many sacrifices of convictions are made, how many free minds are degraded to mere hod-carriers of the State? Hence our age is so poor in ideal manifestations, in tender blossoms of higher culture; the reign of mediocrity is upon us and impresses on our age more and more the stamp of intellectual and ruinous dulness. (Joerg, *History of Social and Political Parties*, p. 107.) *Under such circumstances science can scarcely lead to God.*

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Great (Humboldt, *Cosmos* II, 68, calls him the greatest explorer of nature of all ages), who expressed the above truth in these words: "Who are the unbelievers, who the scoffers? The unbelievers, who are most prominent in the combat with religion, the very leaders among them, have no knowledge of languages, of archaeology and of the history of the world, which are required in order to weigh the reasons of faith." "I have," he continues, "read the most renowned of them; none was capable of even comprehending the mere external meaning of the words of Scripture; none had a real knowledge of nature so that he might have discovered the traces of the Deity which loom so frequently and so brilliantly in the designs and order of all things created."

But to-day denial of GOD is considered a requisite of science and men are appointed to teach our youth who openly and avowedly deny all liberty of the will, and, with it, reject all moral account and responsibility. Will such men be beacons of light to direct mankind upon its path? Brethren, believe it not. Will they be teachers of truth? By no possible means. The good and the true are as inseparably connected with all beings as the will and the intellect are two faculties of the same soul. I cannot, on the one side, live without God and religion, and, on the other, seek the truth; on the one side, because

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not living according to moral law — which is a reflex of the eternal law — possess a low character, and on the other side aim with an exalted mind after the ideal of things — the truth. Therefore, he who said that man or a people, who increase in truth and decrease in goodness is a phenomenon never seen or ever visible, was not far from the truth. Let us now apply this to our own times. In doing good we have not increased; this, because generally admitted, needs no proof; but have we increased in the knowledge of truth? Can this possibly be proven by the scientific systems of which the great pantheist of the past century declared, without injustice, that to them may be applied the words of Peter to Sapphira, "Behold the feet of them who buried thy husband are at the door." (Act. V, 9.) (Hegel, Intro. to hist. of philos.) Will possibly the millions of books prove it which would never have seen daylight if their composers had been searchers after truth? How can there be with the "modern" State and its glorifiers any question of truth, since it wishes to build itself up on the ruin of those unchangeable truths of which we have just spoken? And can it speak of intellectual dignity, when it recognizes no higher intellectual being than itself and uproots in the hearts of the youth faith in a personal immortality — through its teachers of materialism and pantheism? May God protect us

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against such scientists who are without God and without religion! A bad man who is not learned is simply bad, but a learned bad man is, on the contrary, a scourge to humanity, and he possesses against it the weapon to conceal truth and to spread error and to make it reign wherever it suits his interest.

“Do you know, therefore, what God does whenever He wishes to punish a civilized people? He delivers their minds into the power of the tyranny of an impious but learned man. He permits those injurious combinations between genius and perversity which, by means of intellectual pride, prepare intellectual ruin. All the clouds which have arisen through these people in the course of centuries, which they love to call centuries of light, produced a very sad state of darkness. These would-be kings of thought, but, in reality, princes of darkness, tramp about in the night created by themselves and lead the nations which proclaim their applause, in the name of scientific progress, to the very brink of precipices, upon which, through intellectual darkness, great catastrophes are prepared.” (P. Felix, *Necessity of moral progress.*) But then what will become of our youth? Or, rather, let us ask: What has already become of our youth?

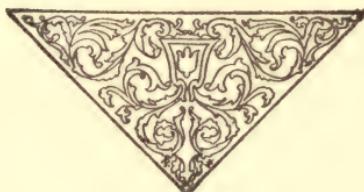
My dear Brethren! Man’s intellect should only bow before truth; it alone should be its moving power. This submission, however, does not in the

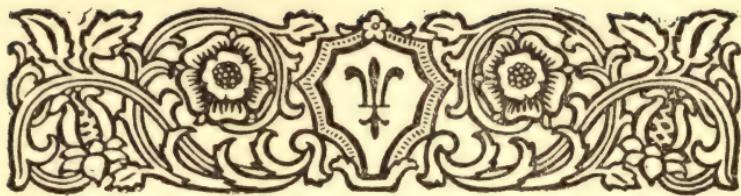
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least contain any dishonor to the human intellect, on the contrary, since the latter is created only for truth, it can only through it attain that dignity and perfection for which it is destined. Truth is the bread and life of the mind. Since God is the creator and preserver of all things, and we are his creatures, which through Him, “possess life, motion and being” (Act. XVII, 28), there follows from this that irrefutable truth with which we were just engaged, that God has a sacred right to every thought of our mind, to every beat of the pulse of our heart, to all our actions, in short, that we are in all things dependent on Him. Ought, therefore, our minds refuse to accept this truth, as if submission to it contained something dishonorable? Why precisely this truth? The intellect, Brethren, is precisely created for truth, and not only for certain truths, to the exclusion of others. Let us, therefore, not imagine that our consent to the above mentioned truth robs the intellect of its dignity; but let us rather be convinced that only this truth can be the foundation of our moral and intellectual dignity. The man who entertains this conviction and stamps it upon his whole life, has shaken off the hard yoke of his passions, and with a view unobscured, and strength of will that is unchangeable, will pass through the midst of all the storms of life, knowing well that a strong hand is stretched out to him that

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will protect and sustain him. When society once more considers itself dependent upon God, and is converted to Him and to His principles, which in Him have their beginning, then there will arise from the midst of our families men, who, in the field of science, of statesmanship and in the practical walks of life, will be endowed with that strength and moral greatness which are now so sadly missed, and by which alone great things are accomplished. The world will then acknowledge its mistake in having abandoned God and His holy laws, and instead of, as formerly, famishing “at the broken cisterns, which they have dug for themselves,” it will quench its thirst “at the fountain of living water.”





THE SECOND DISCOURSE

CHRIST JESUS AND THE SUPERNATURAL ORDER OF THE WORLD

“And therefore He is the mediator of the new testament: that by means of His death, for the redemption of those transgressions, which were under the former testament, they that are called, may receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” — HEB. IX, 15.

MAN is convinced of the existence of God, because he sees His works, because the influence of God upon the world and upon himself lies before his eyes. Whence otherwise, so he concludes, but from this immeasurable ocean of being and life could existence and life descend? Man traverses this earth, all nature around him serves only his purpose, and yet he himself is not unlimited, he is not his own end, he feels himself in all things dependent on that being, which, because the cause of all beings, is itself a being without cause.

As man arrives, by reasoning from himself and nature around him, at the conclusion of the existence

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of that highest cause, in order to be able to explain all being and existence, so also by the same reason, from the existence of the most marvelous work of the earth, does he conclude the existence of a cause corresponding to this work. The Catholic Church is in the world, she has filled about nineteen centuries; the world may hate her; it has persecuted her, but never can it destroy her nor ever deny her existence upon earth. Mankind, before her existence, points to her; mankind after her existence lives upon her — shall this work, the most magnificent of the world, have no cause? The appearance of the Church in the world denotes the turning point of the history of the world. Now, who has produced this wonderful manifestation in the world? Did she appear merely by chance, though we cannot even explain the existence of a blade of grass without a corresponding principle? Oh, no! Both profane and sacred history lead us back to her origin; they both point to Christ as to her founder. But who is Christ Jesus? And what was His mission in the world?

These questions we shall answer before we enter into the sanctuary of the Church itself. We shall consider in this discourse great mysteries, which reveal the relations of Christ to man and to mankind in general, and which, at the same time, are the basis of all future discourses. It is indeed humiliating for him who announces the divine word, in the

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present age, which has no comprehension of great and serious truths and cannot bear true greatness, to speak of mysteries in Christ. But I am addressing a people of Faith, which does not consider Christ with common eyes, and which is impressed by the words: "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God." (Luke, VIII, 10.)

Let us, in spirit, transplant ourselves eighteen hundred years and more: let us ascend Mt. Calvary, near Jerusalem, and pressing forward through a curious crowd of people, let us place ourselves close to the cross. The place is shrouded in deep darkness; as far as our eye can reach, fear has taken possession of the whole surrounding, the silence of the crowd is only broken by the scornful sneers of the Pharisees. From the cross we hear the words of a dying person: "It is consummated." (John, XIX, 30.) And, pray, who is He who has spoken these words, and who is dying on the cross? The heavens are changed in the very hour of high noon into night, the earth quakes, the curtain of the temple is rent asunder, and the kingdom of death gives up its prey. The whole of nature seems to cry out: The Creator of nature has died on the cross. Though deprived of a voice, it gives us the answer, and the Captain of the Roman legion expresses it in the words: "Indeed, this was the

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Son of God" (Mark, XV, 39) and the people who witness this divine tragedy say, striking their breasts: "Indeed this was the Son of God." (Matt. XXII, 54.) A great answer indeed: Son of God He was!

In the contemplation of the crucified God-man sentiment, generally, plays too great a part. The eye rests upon the lacerated body and enters no deeper into the interior of the God-man; — but there is a deeper mystery in Christ! Suffering humanity is only the instrument of the divine Word united to it in the one person; it is, as it were, the bridge over which we reach God.¹

I. In Christ Jesus We Behold Our Supernatural Destiny

When we consider all that the human mind has accomplished in art and in industry; when we see those smoke-belching machines, the future existence of which would have been considered by our fore-fathers an empty dream, crossing our plains with almost the rapidity of an arrow; if we are forced to admire, in all departments, the fruits of human inventions, before which we bow in profound admiration; — still all this appears small compared to

¹ No thought recurs oftener in the writings of the Holy Fathers and the mystical writers than this. Upon the first see Landriot, *Le Christ de la tradition*, II, p. 17 sqq. On the latter see Tauler, Seuses, St. Teresa, etc.

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that grand work of art, the whole universe, which God has created according to His own plan for the purpose of showing man, in a visible manner, His eternal power and divinity. (See Rom. I, 20.) But still far greater than all nature, does man feel himself to be. A single thought of his mind is greater than it, for with it he encompasses heaven and earth. His mind ascends to the very stars; he has discovered their course and in comparison weighed their very masses; he descends into the very bowels of the earth to count its layers and its ledges; the whole of creation serves his purpose; his mind embraces all time and all space, and later having examined all, even this does not satisfy the craving of his mind, for all this is not yet the truth for which his mind is created. And his heart is an abyss which cannot be filled, because everything is smaller than himself, and because the longing of his heart can only be satisfied by the Infinite — by God Himself. But, when man considers the God-man, then he considers himself still greater than he is by nature. Then he appears not only higher than all art and industry, not only greater than all nature, but man then stands above man.

Brethren, we are now considering the very foundation of Christianity, without which we cannot even understand one simple truth of it, it is: our vocation to a supernatural end.

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After St. John had mentioned that God had made all things in time by His eternal Word, and that this Word is the light of men, then he concludes: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelled amongst us." (John, I, 14.) Do you know what the Apostle wishes to express by these words? Let us try to enter more deeply into their meaning. God is the Creator and preserver of all things. Everything exists only inasmuch as it has its being from Him, and all things continue to be only inasmuch as they received their being from Him. What follows from this? We have already seen it: A special relation of the creator to the creature, the relation of dependency upon Him, and, in consequence of this, the longing for union with Him. But "the Word was made flesh"; His infinite goodness impels Him, so to speak, to unite Himself with man, though He, by no means, stands in need of this; He descends from heaven without thereby suffering a change in His divinity; He elevates our nature and unites it to Himself in the unity of person. Without confusion of both natures, Christ Jesus is God and man at the same time. What was the result of this? Through it the God-man gained a double beatitude, first that beatitude which is His by His divine nature, and that other which God has destined for all His rational creatures. (St. Thom. III, 9. 9. a. 2. ad 2.) The humanity of Christ was assumed into the life of God,

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and His soul enjoyed even on earth the beatific vision of the divine essence.

Brethren (or, shall I not call you brethren, since we are all called to the same end?), Christ Jesus became hereby the great type of humanity. But how? Shall every man be elevated to personal union with God? By no means. This union was established but once, and that in Christ Jesus. But we are all called to partake of that other beatitude to which the soul of Christ was elevated.

Created to the likeness of God, or, let us rather say, as a creature of God, man is not able to see God in His essence, but solely in His creatures. To see Him as He is in Himself, to be happy in His clear vision, is something which by nature is not only impossible to man, but to every creature imaginable. This truth must be evident to every man that reasons. If the last aim and end of man were, by nature, a clear and essential vision of God, then man would have to be of the same essence with God, and why? because the end of every essence is the fulfilment of its own activity, and by means of this, of its own being. But if two things are not differentiated in their specific activity, by which they attain their last end, if both are completed in their existence by the same activity, then they necessarily must have the same nature, because the same nature and essence of a thing is the origin of its activity. Now,

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since the end of the specific activity of God is the vision of His own essence, it follows that the creature, by nature, can impossibly have the same end with Him. Therefore, that deep thinker — Tauler — says so beautifully: "The height in God is such that He, who can do all things, cannot accomplish this that He can make a creature so noble or so exalted above all cherubim and seraphim, that the same could, by its own nature, attain or even conceive the height of God. The creature must always be an abysmal nothing compared to His height, for it is created, but God is created by no one, He is of Himself and of no one else."¹

But have we not said that we are all called to that beatitude which consists in the vision of God, in which the soul of Christ on earth already participated? Most assuredly, but this destiny is neither ours by nature, nor is our nature prepared to strive after that most intimate union, or rather communion, of the human and the divine, but it is rather *an effect of the free bounty of God*. This is Catholic doctrine which has always been maintained by the

¹ Tauler, Sermon 16th Sunday after Trinity. In this part the inmost reason is given why the creature, by nature, cannot have the same end as God has, simply because the creature, as the very word indicates, is created, consequently, of nothing, but God as creator is of Himself, therefore creator and creature have a different mode of being and, consequently, a different end. Compare Denifle, *Spiritual Life*, V. ed. 3.

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Church.¹ Is there anything contradictory in this, that God wished to give man a destiny which he could not only not attain by his own power, but could not even desire? No, indeed; presuming the entire dependency of man upon God, it is certainly not strange that He could elevate him to an end, which, only pertaining to God by nature, is beyond the nature of each created mind, though otherwise power and activity are elevated to it by means of the accession of a new and higher foundation of life, as we shall see later in the fifth discourse. What a happiness and prospect for us, my Brethren! What the eye of man cannot see, what his ear cannot hear, what his heart cannot even conceive, God, in His infinite goodness, has prepared for us. (I. Cor. II, 9.) Not satisfied with having created us that we might ascend through His works to the knowledge of Himself, He has placed before us an end, which is nothing less than His own end: To see Him one day in His infinite essence, to know Him as He knows Himself, to love Him as He loves Himself, to live His life, to be happy in His happiness, to be glorified in His glory, as much as it is possible for a creature, which always remains man, to be. What else do

¹ Vatican Council, ch. on Revelation: God moved by His infinite goodness has destined man for a supernatural end, viz., for a participation in the supernatural and divine Good which entirely surpasses the power of the comprehension of the human mind. Denziger, *Enchiridion*, No. 1635.

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we become thereby but “partakers of the divine nature.” (II. Pet. I, 4,) This is the idea of the supernatural destiny, to which not only a few favored ones, but all men, without exception, are called. In what a different light does the Catholic Church regard man from that in which he is considered by the modern infidel who claims, as progress in science, to recognize in man only a higher species of an animal? Which of the two preserves the dignity of man, and wherein lies the difference? Is it not in the total separation or apostasy from God? The modern infidel sees in the dependency upon God a degradation of the moral and intellectual man; he deifies himself; and yet knows no other destiny for himself than that of the irrational animal. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, inculcates in man his dependency on God, but points out for him a destiny which is natural to God alone. Let us now close this meditation in order to resume it later. Before we can submit to a close examination the intimate relation of the supernatural destiny of man to Christ Jesus, to its full extent, as far as this may be possible, we must first consider another truth more closely.

II. In Christ Jesus We See the Fall of Mankind

To prove to man that in his vocation to a supernatural destiny there is no contradiction, that such

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a communion of the human with the divine can in reality be a fact, for this those terrible sufferings were not required which preceded the more cruel death, — his Incarnation alone would be sufficient. Let us therefore enter more deeply into the mystery of the crucified God-man, and let us ask ourselves: Why these sufferings, why this cruel death? The prophet Isaias, who, seven centuries before Christ, pointed as clearly as an Evangelist to the life and death of Christ, answers: “He was wounded for our iniquities; He was bruised for our sins . . . We all like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (LIII, 5, 6.) Yes, herein lies before us another part of the mystery of the God-man. Christ Jesus suffers and dies on the cross for our sins! Does not the sad sight of His lacerated body convince us of this? Does not the fourth word which He spoke on the cross remove every doubt: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Sin has robbed us of the fruition of the supreme good, whereunto we were called, and now God hides Himself in the crucified God-man; His human nature, though not in essence, yet in effect and feeling, is robbed of its union with God, and is abandoned in consequence of this to a most disconsolate dereliction, which presses from Him this cry of sorrow. Sin robbed us of union with

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God, as much as it could, and the atonement for this sin stripped the God-man on the cross of the enjoyment of this union, as much as it was possible.

Brethren! The greatness and the misery of man lie so clearly before our eyes that true religion cannot refrain from drawing our attention to the source of this greatness in us, and to the source of this misery. Or, should it not be necessary that true religion, which is charged with the duty of comprehending us completely, should know the inmost of our nature?¹ Most certainly it should, and if the Catholic Church finds the source of the true greatness of man in his vocation to a supernatural end, then she shows us, on the other hand, more eloquently than any one possibly can, the source of human misery.

Original sin is one of the deepest mysteries of Christianity. Nothing is more gruffly repelling than the doctrine of original sin, — but *without its admission we are a mystery to ourselves*. Original sin seems to some men a folly, and we admit that to reason it is incomprehensible; but this folly is wiser than all wisdom, without it we can neither comprehend man nor the history of man. Let us first con-

¹ See Pascal, *Pensées* 823, ed. Michaut, *Fribourg*, p. 362: A religion to be true must know our nature, its greatness and its littleness and the foundation of each. What other religion than the Christian possesses this knowledge?

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sider what effects original sin produced in Adam and Eve, in order then to follow its course in the subsequent history of man.

Living of the supernatural life, to which Adam and Eve were called, and participating therein through supernatural grace, they could fall from the destiny which was natural to God alone, just as they were elevated to it purely by God's goodness. After the transgression of the divine precept that supernatural bond, and, in consequence of this, also the natural bond, which united them to God, was broken; they fell through sin from the supernatural estate; they lost the right to see God in His essence. Their soul did not cease to remain spiritual and immortal, but it was separated from the living fountain of life and lapsed into a death far more horrible than that of the body — the spiritual death through sin. The consequences of this fall became evident, above all things, in the source of man's life — in the soul. Reason, instead of remaining clear and free by nature, became obscured. It remained spiritual and rational, but it lost its acuteness, it ceased to be penetrated by the divine life. The will, instead of remaining by nature inclined toward the good, became inclined to evil and lost its spirit of rectitude. The mind, which withdrew from its natural condition of dependency upon God, lost, in consequence of this, dominion over the body which

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rebelled against it and began to domineer over it. But the body itself, originally destined, with the soul that animated it, to lead an immortal life, lost this privilege and became a prey of death, of which, without sin, the very name would have been unknown.¹

From Adam sin passed upon every one of his descendants. Or, is this perchance only a fable? But if so, whence in man all those palpable contradictions? Is it not strange that the mind of man, which feels itself greater and broader than all nature and has examined the laws according to which the whole of the universe is formed into such a majestic structure; which conquers and overpowers matter in art and nature, aye, even spiritualizes it, — that this highest principle should become in the self-same man a wretched slave of his lowest passions and sensual appetite? The spirit obeys the flesh! who would believe this, if not every one of us felt it within himself? The most heroic general and the most highly gifted researcher can, on the very day of victory, the one over the enemy, the other over error, which is also an enemy, become like a debased woman that is a victim of depraved and sensual desires.² Who will solve this riddle, if not the

¹ Cardinal Newman says: "We are out of joint with the purposes of our creator; and all a proof of original sin." (Translator.)

² Compare, for example, in reference to Alexander the Great: Weiss, *Weltgeschichte*, I, 423, 427; in regard to the wise Socrates: Xenophon,

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Catholic Church, which points to that original guilt of which, through Adam, we have all become partakers?

Original sin alone is the key to unlock this mystery of contradictions in man.¹ From Adam sin, with all its dreadful consequences, passed upon all men, hence the disorder in man and in the whole human race. Or, is this dreadful state of the human race a natural one? No, on the contrary, it contains just as many contradictions within itself as does that of the individual man.

After the immediate relation of mankind with God had been severed by sin, and the original divine order was disturbed and man in himself became divided, then there necessarily arose between men themselves a disordered relation. Man had separated himself from God in Paradise, and now he separates himself from the likeness of God — his fellow man. The fratricide Cain appears as the first witness of this truth, and his criminal act appears like a red thread throughout the whole history of man. Man separated from God loves God no longer, for love of God and separation from God exclude each other; but man separated from God

*Conviv. 2, 11; concerning the “divine” Plato: Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, II, p. 427.*

¹ See Weiss, *Apologie des Christenthums* 2b., especially discourses I-VIII.

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loves no longer his fellow man, for he no longer recognizes in him the true reason of love — order and beauty — and he casts him aside. But what will man now love? for love he must, whether he will or no; love gives the impulse to all his motions and activities. But in his present condition whither does his love tend? Oh, let us not question very long, let us but open our hearts and we shall discover that there is but one thing it loves and values highly; itself. Yes, love torn away from God falls back upon itself. Man makes himself the center of all his thoughts and actions, he loves only himself, at least, he loves himself more than humanity, he loves himself more than God. That which is superior to him, he envies; whatever is on a level with him he despises, and whatever is beneath him he tramples under foot. And what indeed is his fellow man to him? Nothing but an instrument of his self-seeking aim. All his thoughts and actions are directed only towards enriching himself at the expense of his fellow man. He is the center into which all rays converge. Tell me, Brethren! is this the natural condition of man? Can this be the original relation between men, since every man, by nature, is socially inclined and to live in union with each other?¹ Most

¹ Therefore Aristoteles calls man “a social being” and says that he who does not feel within himself a necessity of association with others is either an animal or a God, but not a man.

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certainly not; this sad condition indicates a common evil in the human race, which the Church alone can explain by the mystery of original sin.

But our modern age looks back upon antiquity with a horror; it cannot comprehend how even its most cultured people, the Greeks, could extend their self-love to such a contempt for man that made him appear to them only as an animated instrument. And in fact their greatest intellect, the genius of logic and the deepest thinker in the purely natural domain of reason ever seen on this earth, Aristoteles, characterized the state of slavery as perfectly natural. And his teacher, the “divine” Plato, held no milder views. Athens, the home of philosophers, counted its 20,000 citizens and 400,000 slaves. But in Rome and Italy the lot of slaves was even, if possible, more deplorable. The whole Roman law, on this subject, rested upon this significant sentence: “There are three kinds of instruments: those endowed with a voice; those endowed with a half-voice, and those that are mute. Those endowed with a voice are the slaves; those with a half-voice are the oxen and horses; the mute are the plows and other implements of farming.” The number of slaves was still greater there; it was not a rarity that a rich citizen owned from 6000 to 8000 slaves.¹ The Stoics, and even

¹ Tacitus, *Annal.* III, 53: XIV, 43, 44. Grupp, *Kulturgeschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit*, I, 293 sqq.; II, 54 sqq., 387 sqq.

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Cicero, reckoned compassion and pity among vices and a duty for a wise man to shun.¹ This was truly a most deplorable condition of the ancient pagan world, of which the slaves formed the vast majority.

But what has become of our present industrial condition and so-called culture, which have ceased to be permeated by Christianity? Do they not bear upon their brow, as did the ancient pagan world, the same mark of Cain? We have only changed the names, but the thing has remained the same, if it has not become greatly deteriorated. As death, the consequence of original sin, forms the dark background of even the most brilliant picture of life, so also is egoism, self-love, the consequence of original sin, the dark background of our glaring industrial condition. Does it not make man, instead of free and happy, a mere machine? Does it not debilitate the human race by excessive and uninterrupted labor, by the too early insistence to be at it? Does it not make man only subservient to matter? Without cultivating his mental life, it rather extinguishes it. And why all this? To enrich the one master and to multiply his products. The industrial craze of the present day weakens the

¹ See Rohrbacher, *Universal History* III, 364: "The slave should never become too gay . . . the rod hangs constantly over him . . . to his death there was no serious legal objection. A crucifixion, a condemnation to bloody spectacular feasts . . . could be arbitrarily pronounced." Grupp, I, 297-301.

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body and degrades the soul; it smothers within the heart of society all the germs of civilization and creates in its stead a barbarism, which is little less than that of the ancients.¹ Yes, indeed, our so-called industry and culture languishes to-day under the curse of original sin, and brings, only in another form, all the conditions to light which the modern age condemns in the ancient world. It threatens us physically, morally and socially. The premature death of the laborer is caused by it. The moral ruin and dissolution of the Christian family among the laboring class point to it as to its source. The laborers are forced to live huddled together in excessive numbers, whereby the different sexes are much thrown together. Our present industrial condition is certainly not the least cause of our present social dissolution.² Where is the remedy to come from? Will it possibly come from the capitalists? But is it not they who, through their egoism, as experience and history show, have developed, in a great measure, this sad condition, and who continue

¹ Père Felix, *Conference: Material Progress vs. Christianity*. Compare Weiss, *Apologie*, on the evil and cultural crimes of our times, II, 158-203.

² Ketteler: *Die Arbeiterfrage und das Christenthum*, Mainz 1864. — Leo XIII. Encycl. "Rerum novarum" in which the great Pope says that production and commerce have almost become the monopoly of a few and that a few excessively rich could impose upon the laboring classes a yoke equal to slavery.

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to foster it? Does not the above-mentioned philosopher, who had not even an idea of Christianity, when compared to the pagans who grew up in the very midst of the extraordinary blessings of Christianity, does he not appear to a great advantage when he says: "To all slaves liberty should be offered as a prize of honor"?¹ Let us now, Brethren, turn away from this sad and gloomy drama of reality and cast our eyes again upon the crucified God-man, in order that we may discover in Him another mystery which will raise our drooping courage.

III. In the God-Man We Discover the Rehabilitation of Men

We have just seen in sin the cause of the suffering and death of Christ; but, was sin the only cause? Did not the crucified God-man rather wish to obtain through the atonement of sin a much higher object which He originally intended?

The first plan of the Almighty was frustrated by Adam through his sin in Paradise. Adam fell from the high supernatural estate to which God had elevated mankind, — the work of God was shattered. But the very moment in which Adam had plunged the human race into its ruin, God predestined another man for its rehabilitation, in order to reassume

¹ Aristoteles, *Polit.*, VII, 10.

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the divine plan and to restore the divine work to this plan. All, which brought about our ruin, was to be changed for the better. A new Adam, a new Eve, a new angel, a new fruit should destroy upon a new tree, — the tree of the cross, — all the evil which the forbidden fruit had caused.¹ This new Adam appeared in Christ Jesus. Ever since the first Adam had sinned the entire human race inclined towards decay, which threatened to end in absolute ruin. The second Adam, Christ Jesus, by the sacrifice of the cross, atoned for the original guilt. He upholds with His transpierced hands the sinking world and leads it back to its supernatural destiny. This is the full mystery of the crucified God-man, and the explanation of His word on the cross: “It is consummated!” Let us now rivet our attention, Brethren, so as to remove every distraction, upon this meditation, which is calculated to open before us a deep vista, both into the life of the Church and into the present day life.

Adam was the center of natural creation, the father and head of the natural and fallen race. Christ Jesus, the new Adam, is the man-made union of creation with God. He is the Father and Head of the redeemed. The contradiction that is within us and the egoism, which is the root of the discord among men, — these tell us that we are united in

¹ Compare Bossuet, *Elevat.* 8, serm. 3, elev.

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Adam, and that it is we who have sinned in him, who died in him. But in Christ Jesus, the second Adam, we celebrate a new union with Him, the God-man, the divine and human nature are united in the unity of the one person, so that through Him, upon the cross, the union of God with all men may be restored.¹ Through the loss of the union in Adam, we lost a threefold original union: with ourselves, with our neighbors, and with God. We were divided in every respect, through union in Christ Jesus that threefold union was restored and all nature celebrates its redemption.

This is the meaning of the sacrifice of the cross. There, upon the cross, the God-man redeemed the world. He alone could accomplish this fully. He paid the debt and reconciled man to God. I have said that He alone could do it adequately: for sin, says St. Thomas,² is, in a measure, an infinite malice, because directed against the infinite majesty of God, and the magnitude of the outrage is measured by the dignity of the person offended. If this person be infinite, then the adequate atonement of the injury committed against Him can only be effected by a deed of infinite value and not by a mere man.

¹ Hilarius, in ep. ad Ephes. No. 15; S. J. Damasc, serm. in nav. B. M. Vir.

² III. q. 1. a 2. ad 2 and Schaezler, *Das Dogma von der Menschwerdung Gottes*, s. 299 sqq.

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But what no man, nor all men together, could accomplish, that was done in a superabundant manner by the God-man, whose sacred humanity, through its personal union with God, partook of His infinite dignity. Christ Jesus, the one God-man, was the ransom of infinite value of the infinite guilt.

What follows from all this? Has not Christ, in consequence of His work of redemption, a special claim upon us? In our first discourse we have seen that God is Lord and Master of the universe and of all men, because He is the creator, and we are the creatures. In the first part of this discourse we considered our unmerited exaltation to the same end which in God alone is natural. By sin God and we are separated, and we are separated from God not only inasmuch as He is the author of the supernatural, but also inasmuch He is the cause of the natural order. Sin separates from God in general. God could have permitted us to remain in this condition and to be eternally lost, the same as He did the fallen angels whom He spared not. But He wished to pardon man on condition that to Him be rendered perfect satisfaction. The second person of the Blessed Trinity became man, and by means of His humanity united to Him personally, He rendered complete satisfaction. Is the God-man not a new creator of mankind? Without redemption we would have remained subject to eternal death, — and

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Christ Jesus, through His death upon the cross obtains for us new life; we had forfeited the right to see God in His essence, — and Christ Jesus obtains for us this right for this purpose. Is not therefore Christ Jesus, in this sense, the source of our being and of our happiness, and consequently the new creator of mankind? Yes, indeed, — and this we are told by the Apostle of nations: “And therefore He is the mediator of the new testament: that by means of His death, for the redemption of those transgressions, which were under the former testament, they that are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” (Heb. IX, 15.) (Compare, II, 10.)

But if Christ Jesus is the new creator of the human race, what follows from this? This — that Christ should reign over all. As God He is absolutely entitled to the dominion over all things created, but as man, He is entitled to the dominion over all men, because He secured their redemption from sin and death by means of His sacred humanity, and through the activity of His human nature, because it is the cause of the salvation of all. Christ must reign over all; we are His own, purchased by His precious Blood.

IV. Christ Jesus is the End of the Whole of Creation

It may be asked: Have we drawn the last conclusion from all that has been said? By no means;

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another remains to be drawn, which is the compliment of those which preceded, and which opens a world of truths to the close observer.

The whole human race is directed in view of Christ Jesus; Christ Jesus is the end of all creation.

This is a truth of a far-reaching significance. And why should it not be such? I could point out to you, Brethren, in proof of this, the fact that as the whole inferior world is created for man, because he is the most distinguished creature on earth, so the whole creation, mankind included, is for Christ's sake, because He, the God-man, is the most distinguished part thereof, so that all else, compared to Him, dwindles into insignificance; but our former explanation seems to touch more perfectly the substance of the cause. Christ Jesus, by means of His humanity, became the cause of the salvation of all, but because this humanity is united in the unity of one person with Him, in whose clear vision the last aim and end of all rational creatures consist, so have also, in this sense, all men in Christ Jesus their last end. His sacred humanity forms the bridge and only way to His divinity. Thus He expresses this Himself: "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me." (John, XIV, 6.) All men find their salvation only in Christ. He is, because the end of all creation, the beginning and end thereof. But, if He is the beginning and end of the world, then it

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must be directed in view of Him, or, to express it more correctly, Christ has become the center of the history of the world, because He is the end of all motion and development, of all that is done and made therein.¹

There is, therefore, no purely natural order in the world; there is only a supernatural and a Christian one. Since the eternal possession of God is our aim and end, which is only attained through Christ Jesus, therefore, the visible world and whole nature, which is, of course, not destroyed by the supernatural, is only a place of preparation and probation for us, and is directed and governed by God, not in view of the present state, but solely in view of the future. If this be so, does it not follow, most logically, that as without granting original sin we remain a mystery to ourselves, so also without Christ, the restorer of the supernatural order of the world, we can neither comprehend ourselves nor the history of the human race? Most assuredly so, for the cause of the object alone explains all, without it we can, it is true, discover facts, but never their inner causes. We must not now anticipate our future discourses, but can we not already perceive an entirely new view of the world? Jesus Christus heri et hodie, ipse et in saecula — “Christ Jesus yester-

¹ Compare Scheeben, *Mysterien des Christenthum's*, 2 ed. p. 360, sqq. Hettinger, *Timotheus*, 2 ed. p. 487, sqq.

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day and to-day, and the same forever." (Heb. XIII, 8.) Before the centuries began their courses, Christ Jesus was: "Before Abraham was made, I am." (John VIII, 58.) And after having made the centuries, before His appearance they point to Him, and the centuries that came after Him rest upon Him and find in Him alone their explanation. Paganism and Judaism were only the vestibule of Christianity; all great events in them were simply preparations of the advent of the "expected one of all nations¹ until the fulness of time was come" (Gal. IV, 4), in which He, the real Master of the universe, began to repossess the world, which the evil one had alienated from Him most wrongfully, and which He will continue to possess to the end of time; for Christ is the main object of the world, and, therefore, He must reign in it.²

Now, if Christ is the main object of the world, and all mankind is placed in the supernatural order, then the natural order, that is, the order in which the natural moral law alone rules, of which we have spoken in our first discourse, cannot be the last and

¹ See Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, VII, 32.

² It would require too much space to pursue this thought any farther. It is sufficient to point to several competent works, such as Stolberg, *History of the Religion of Christ*; Doellinger, *Paganism and Judaism*; Rohrbacher, *Universal History of the Catholic Church*; the splendid Encycl. of Leo XIII on the consecration of the human race to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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only rule of our moral actions, — all actions must be influenced and directed rather by the supernatural end. The last end must always prevail and control all things. We cannot consider the man of time a different creature from the man of eternity; he is one and the same man, here in preparation, and there in completion. Now what follows from this? Nothing less than this that both in education, and in the solution of all social questions we dare not disregard the last end of mankind, but on the contrary, that it is this precisely that must be the leading and fundamental thought. This is most worthy of the consideration of our own time.¹ Christians must not be satisfied to educate the youth to be righteous and moral men without regarding their supernatural end; for apart from the fact that apostasy from Christianity is mostly a mere relapse into paganism, as our own days fully show, such an education, compared to the Christian, is as far beneath it as the supernatural surpasses the natural and heaven is above the earth. Did we not all become by means of our supernatural destiny children of God, and, as children, heirs of God and co-heirs of Christ? (Rom. VIII, 16, 17.)

¹ P. Albert Weiss, *Apologie* vol. III. Part II. Discourse 13-18. Leo XIII emphasizes very emphatically that the social question is not only a political one, but preeminently a moral and a religious one, and, consequently, must be decided according to moral law and principles of religion.

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At the conclusion of this point I cannot refrain from drawing attention to an evil, which, alas! is too little noticed and the consideration of which is of the greatest moment. In order to draw away our educated people, and gradually through them all the rest, from their supernatural end, neither gross materialism nor pantheism nor atheism are necessary, — the moral sentiment of the majority recoils from these forms of infidelity — an apparently very innocent method accomplishes the apostasy from the supernatural end. If a physicist, a metaphysician, or a naturalist, etc., does not base his studies on a supernatural standpoint, still he can accomplish great things by honest investigation and he will not exercise a pernicious influence upon the moral life of other men provided God remains the starting and finishing point of his investigations. But in ethics it is very different. It treats of the active life of man; it teaches true morality, and how man must act to be moral. It discloses to him his real duty of life, and how he is to fulfil it. If ethics rests upon purely natural ground, like philosophy, and treats only of natural morality, then its explanation of the fundamental principles and notions of natural morality, as well as its doctrine of natural duties and virtues, may be in place, and even are, since through the supernatural order the natural law of morality is by no means abolished, — but in its application to the

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actual life of man such ethics is not sufficient, because it rests upon a purely natural standpoint, for our destiny is not a natural one, but supernatural, and the present task of life is but a direction to its solution in heaven. But, in nearly all philosophical ethics, intended for the education of our youth and the higher grades of society, is not the destiny of man, and consequently also the means to attain it, the solution of the social questions which are intimately connected with the life of the individual as well as that of society — is it not treated and discussed from the purely natural view-point, without one word to indicate that this point of view in the purely natural order of the world may be a correct one, but, in reality, is not sufficient? Need we therefore be surprised if the educated youth is a complete stranger to a Christian life and if our present national economists, with even the best of intentions, often strive to solve the great social questions of the day from a purely natural standpoint? These were precisely the views and convictions which they were taught, either at home or in the higher schools, and which estrange them more and more from the supernatural end. But if paganism can only be correctly judged from the Christian standpoint, how much more is this standpoint necessary for the judgment of Christian times, and the solution of the social questions of the day. Need we any

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farther be surprised if we see a constantly more unbridled youth growing up around us, and all efforts and aims thwarted for the amelioration and elevation of modern society, since but one standpoint is correct and leads to happiness — and that is the supernatural or Christian one? ¹

And now, my dear Brethren, after having considered these great mysteries in the Crucified God-man and the saying of the Catholic Church has become clear to us: *Regnavit a ligno Deus* — “From the cross God has reigned” — let us descend from

¹ Hereby ethics are by no means excluded from a purely philosophical standpoint, because every true moral philosophy points to positive and hence also supernatural laws of God that must be observed. But in our modern days there exists *de facto* no morality that considers, on the one hand, God as the supreme law-giver, but, on the other, excludes the consideration of the supernatural destiny of man; in the latter case it is most certainly atheistic in some form, and “when once the bonds are severed which bind man to God, the supreme law-giver and Judge of all men, then there is only an apparent, purely temporal, irreligious or, as it is called, independent morality, which, since it disregards the eternal law and the divine commandments, must necessarily lead to a declivitous path of extreme and harmful consequences, according to which man becomes his own law-giver. Man, incapable to raise himself upon the wings of Christian hope to supernatural blessings, will enjoy the full measure of the pleasures and conveniences of life; the thirst after amusements will grow, the mania for riches, the greedy rush after boundless gain, irregardless of right and justice; ambition is enflamed and impatiently demands satisfaction, though it violates every law; and finally contempt of all law and of public authority and a general immorality ensues and is followed by the total destruction of all culture.” Leo XIII, Encycl. of March 19, 1902.

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Mt. Calvary and enter in spirit the former metropolis of the pagan world, but now the metropolis of Christianity; let us pass by the castle of S. Angelo and proceed on to the piazza of St. Peter. There we behold erected a magnificent obelisk of red granite, which in the days of the Roman emperors Caligula and Nero stood near its present location. The point of the obelisk is crowned with a cross, in which there is a particle of that sacred wood on which the God-man has redeemed us. Upon the socle of the obelisk we read the following inscription: *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat* — “Christ conquers, Christ rules, Christ governs.” Our hearts melt, our eyes become dim through tears, and our minds turn to the days of the past. This spot was once the theater of those cruel plays which were enacted on the occasion of the first persecution of the Christians under Nero. The gardens of Nero surrounding this place, which at that time was a race-course, were in those days at the approaching darkness illuminated by the burning of Christian victims who were tied to stakes and covered with pitch; others were crucified, others again covered with the skins of animals, and torn to pieces by ferocious dogs.¹ And now? Yes, to-day the cross of Christ proclaims on this very spot the victory over His enemies. The cross is honored over the whole

¹ See Reber, *Die Ruinen Romes*, p. 309.

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world; at its foot was crushed the fury of nations and kings—and throughout the ages is heard: Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat—"Christ conquers, Christ rules, Christ governs." Was this victory easily achieved? After a tenfold persecution, after a combat of three hundred years, the religion of the cross ascended the throne of the ruler of the world. Is this not most wonderful? The cross was to conquer, not at a time when the Roman empire was lying prostrate, but at a time when the then known world had attained the summit of the glory of its science, and when Rome was the ruler of the world and all power on earth lay in the hand of a single person. Christ must needs rule over all.

Such is the thought that animates us in viewing the cross in the piazza of St. Peter, and which every cross brings to our mind. "Oh, cross"! cries out a great mind, "Thou hast conquered. The whole world and all its proud Lords are thy subjects. Upon the brows of Cæsars I see your glittering splendor. I see you raised aloft above the Roman eagles to the armies, and to them thou gavest victory. The proud insignia of the consuls bow lowly to thee. Senate and people do homage to thee, all consider it a glory to follow thee, the triumphant standard of the King of kings. Soon thine heavenly influence will be the sweetest benefit to all people

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oppressed by the barbaric yoke, and these will soften their wild manners in order to make out of divided and inimical tribes a people of brotherly love.”¹

But, Brethren, is it true! Did we really consider the entire mystery of the God-man? Do we now fully realize what Christ is to us? and what He desires of the world? Let us try, in conclusion, to discover a still closer connection between Him and ourselves.

There is but one supernatural order in the world; this we have shown. The present state is only a preparation for its eternal perfection in heaven. The effective cause of this eternal perfection through the beatific vision of God is the humanity of Christ, not indeed in its own power, but by means of its personal union with God, by which it partakes of His power.² God ever remains the first cause of our happiness; but to communicate it to others He makes use of the sacred humanity of Christ as an instrument personally united with Him. This truth requires no further proof, for our entire third point is devoted to it. If, therefore, this life is only a preparation of the life to come, if it has value only inasmuch as it is ordained to the supernatural end, to the vision of God, if, furthermore, according to

¹ Ravignan, *Conference: The Combat of the Gospel.*

² St. Thomas, q. 29, de verit., a. 4. ad 4.

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the words of St. Leo,¹ the sacred humanity of Christ is the only way to the whole person of Christ, and the divinity can only be approached by us under the veil of the flesh: must we not, even now in the land of preparation, partake of the sacred humanity, of the flesh of Christ in order to become perfected through the clear beatific vision of God? Yes, indeed. This requisite was fully provided for by Christ in the most adorable sacrament of the altar. If through the Incarnation God became a member of the human family, then we, through communion in the holy Eucharist, are changed into Him and become partakers of the divine nature. Verily, in order that we may reach, even upon earth, the divinity under the veil of the flesh, nothing was more appropriate than this divine food. On earth we are not in a state of perfection, but only on the way to perfection, consequently, the partaking of the God-man cannot yet be complete, and the holy Eucharist is only a preparation towards that perfection. "Some day," says St. Augustin,² "we will no longer possess the holy Eucharist — then it will be the Eternal Word that we shall see, hear and receive. Our life will then be the life of the angels and we will be satiated only by the Divine Word." Twofold therefore is the most holy Sacrament, in

¹ Epist. 59. See Schaezler, p. 83.

² Serm. 57, No. 7, on Landriot, *L'Eucharistie*, p. 297.

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order that it may answer its purpose: truth and type, truth — because it really and essentially contains the flesh and blood of our Redeemer; type — because the completed truth, the eternal beatific enjoyment of the divine Word, to which Christ Jesus by His death on the cross regained for us the right, is only contained in the preparation and, as in a germ, in the Sacrament of the altar on earth.

The completely revealed truth, the fulfilment of all our wishes, and all our desires, is reserved to the days of eternity, when our food will be the Word itself in the full brightness of His light, when our drink will be that wine, of which Christ Jesus once said (Matt. XXVI, 29) that He shall drink it with us, as a new wine in the kingdom of His Father, and which is no other than the essence of God Himself, which we shall enjoy eternally without any interruption, receive and thereby be changed into Him at the same time. This is also the meaning of the words of St. Thomas:¹ “The Sacrament of the holy Eucharist is a type of the possession and enjoyment of God in our heavenly country.”

Oh, chaste mysteries of Christianity! how pure must we not be to understand you, and what truths do you not reveal to him who once has begun to enter into you more deeply, and who imprints you upon his life by the complete fulfilment of all his

¹ III. q. 73. a. 4.

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Christian duties! Man and the whole human race are no longer a riddle; all is bright and clear, for you it is who give the correct rule for the judgment of the actual condition of mankind, of the actions and fortunes of nations. Even the greatest evils and calamities which afflict both the individual and whole nations do not disconcert us, for they tell us that this earth is only a transition to that supernatural happiness which Christ Jesus, the first-born of all nations, has regained for us through His death on the cross. In view of Him the world is directed, that there be one who reigns, and upon whom all eyes shall be turned from the rising to the setting of the sun, from the beginning of creation to the end thereof — *Christ Jesus*.





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THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

“And He showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.” — Revel. XXI, 10, 11.

THE present age is mentally diseased, and suffering in consequence of “fixed ideas,” or rather, those who are called upon in the world to give tone are suffering in consequence of their “fixed ideas,” and only differ from the really insane confined in asylums in this that the insanity of the former is voluntary, and they wish to infect others. There is especially one idea which, for a long time, has been the cause of much confusion of thought, the idea that *the Catholic Church has outlived herself*. You will scarcely find any idea to-day more fixed than this. “The Catholic Church,” they say, “has outlived herself, she is an institution that probably filled its place in the world during the past, but our modern age can have nothing to do with her. Separation of the State from the Church, of

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religion from the school, these are the demands of the progressive spirit of the age.” In order to impose this fixed idea — which is only the product of a few — upon others, so-called public opinion had to be formed, in an artistic way, from above. The head and the ministers of the Catholic Church were calumniated and ridiculed through the public press; her laws and institutions were decried as the abortive product of the dark ages; the whole Church was represented as an asylum of superstition and as the cause of all evil that befell either society or the State. If once upon a time the pagans accused the Christians of being the cause of all calamities, of wars, of famine, and the defeat of the armies,¹ so now one of the most common accusations against the Church of to-day is this: “She is the enemy of the State.” Now, since the whole reading world — and who is there who does not belong to it? — daily imbibes this poison through the reading of the great journals of the day, even often without knowing or wishing it, we need not be surprised that the prejudices against the Catholic Church are so numerous, if not almost general.

Love of truth demands that we thoroughly investigate whether or not these accusations against the Catholic Church have any foundation? Whether the Church is in reality an institution as dangerous

¹ Tertullian, *Apol.* c. 40.

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to the State and as unpatriotic as she is everywhere and constantly accused of being? Since the most wretched criminal is not denied the right to defend himself, or to be defended, therefore, the same right ought to be granted to the Church which for nineteen centuries has fearlessly met her accusers with the words of the Savior: "Which of you shall convince me of sin?" (John VIII, 46.) After having learned to know the Founder of the Catholic Church, we will answer, in this discourse, the question: What is the purpose of the Catholic Church in the world? What is her origin and what is her relation to society? There are to-day no more important questions than these, and, therefore, they are deserving of the most careful attention.

I. The Supernatural Aim of the Church

Christ must reign over all — this we have seen as the result of our last discourse. Christ Jesus came into the world to recover it. God Himself gave Him the nations of the earth as His inheritance. "The Lord hath said to Me: Thou art My Son, this day I have begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." (Ps. II, 7, 8.) And what David here prophesied of the person of Christ, — that Christ Himself confirms,

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saying: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth." (Matt. XXVIII, 18.) Upon the cross He destroyed the reign of death and conquered the powers of hell; upon the cross He subjected to Himself the princes and people of the earth and acquired for His elect the eternal inheritance of Heaven. But what does this recovery or, rather, re-taking of the world mean? Nothing less than the restoration of the kingdom of the children of God to humanity. Therefore Christ Jesus atoned the guilt of sin by which that immense chasm between God and man was established. Without the atonement of this guilt union and the sonship with God would have remained an impossibility for man.

But does this of itself effect the salvation of the individual man? Did the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross liberate man from the debt of religion? Then wherein would the kingdom of the children of God consist? The restoration of man, which was effected by Christ, must, on the contrary, be realized by each individual man, and religion must aim to unite man to God, his supernatural end. Now, if this end, as its very name indicates, surpasses every natural faculty, namely the vision of the divine essence itself, — if the last end of man is, as we have already seen, not a natural, but a supernatural union with God, then, the natural powers are not sufficient to attain it, but man needs therefore a supernatural

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aid for the acquisition of which Christ died for us on the cross. But the communication of this supernatural aid He made dependent upon our connection with an outward, salutary institution. This salutary institution, in which He lives unto the end of the world, and to whose control and ministration He bequeathed all the treasures of the redemption, and which shall lead all nations to their supernatural end, we call *the Church*. Her foundation was necessary, not because all the great things of men succeed in the world mainly through association — for in such a case she would simply remain a natural institution — but her foundation and connection with her are necessary, because supernatural union with God is not possible without a supernatural aid, and this supernatural aid is only obtained for us through the Church, founded by Jesus Christ especially for this purpose. She is, therefore, the great institution of God established for the redemption and salvation of mankind; her task is to continue the work of Christ to the very end of time.¹ Let us reserve the more complete establishment of this truth for the fifth discourse, and let us content ourselves here solely with the statement of the fact. But, if we ask:

¹ "As Christ Jesus appeared on earth that men might have life and have it more abundantly (John X, 10) so, in like manner, is it the task of the Church to secure eternal salvation." Leo XIII, Encycl. on the Christian State.

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Will we discover this institution in the Catholic Church, or is some other Church entitled to this privilege? The answer to this question presents no farther difficulty, after having made the position of Christ clear in regard to the world, in our former discourse.

The mysteries of Christianity possess a remarkable property: They are incomprehensible and comprehensible. In themselves, though communicated by revelation and apprehended by faith, they remain to human reason, nevertheless, covered with the veil of faith and enveloped in certain darkness;¹ but without their admission man and the whole human race is an incomprehensible mystery. And Why? Because there is, in reality no purely natural order of the world, but only a supernatural and a Christian one. But, since in this order of the world, man individually and the whole human race collectively are governed by God only in regard to the supernatural end, therefore, in judging the history of mankind without regard to the supernatural standpoint, in which the mysteries are necessarily contained, man and his history, humanity with its happenings and its experiences would be an insolvable riddle. This truth appeared to us as self-evident in our last discourse, and we find it now fully established. Rationalism denies the appear-

¹ Con. Vatic. *De fide et ratione*, c. 4. (Denziger, *Enchiridion*, n. 1644.)

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ance of the God-man nineteen centuries ago. It robs Him either of His divinity and makes Him appear as merely one of the wise men of the earth,¹ or it regards Him as nothing more than a mere idea in the mind of a learned Jew. But, supposing we grant this for a moment, how then will you explain the transformation of the world for the last nineteen hundred years, of which history appears as a witness? An idea alone, without an effective cause, could impossibly produce this transformation. Nothing could be more ridiculous than such an assumption. The old and the modern age offer abundant proof of this.

A mere man, however, could not be the efficient cause of this transformation. Cause and effect stand in a corresponding relation to each other; the effect can never be greater than the cause which produced it. But this transformation of the world which has been produced within the past nineteen hundred years presupposes a cause, which can only

¹ This is a very old error. Even St. Augustin (*De consens. Evang.* lib. 2, c. 1.) mentions some philosophers who adored not God in Christ, but honored Him as the wisest of men. He writes of himself (*Conf.* lib. 7 c. 18 and 19): "I considered my Lord Christ Jesus as a man of great wisdom to whom no one could be compared . . . I knew this much of that which was written of Him, that since Christ ate, drank, slept, moved about, rejoiced and was sorrowful and spoke, that Thy word was not united to that flesh in any other manner than with a human soul and with human senses."

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be adequately explained through Jesus Christ, because He is God and man at the same time. A mere man would be incapable of producing such an effect.¹

Now, what transformation has taken place in the world of reason. Before the appearance of Christ in the world it was solely occupied with man and nature. The pagan confined himself within himself; he moved solely within his own mind, his thoughts; his own “Ego” was the center of his thought and every effort. From this sprang also his religious views. The Indian and the Egyptians, the fathers of world-wisdom; the Greeks — the masters of fine arts; the Romans — the rulers of the universe, they all adored animals, the elements and lifeless creatures; to them all things, to use the appropriate language of Bossuet, were gods except God Himself. And behold! Christ appears in the world, and He utters the great word: “I am the Truth” — and Christ becomes the center of all investigation throughout all centuries and of all adoration and worship! The moral world moved as did the intellectual around the “Ego.” The egoism of the ancients brought forth that monster, for the annihilation of which no mere human power was sufficient: *slavery*; it was the father of that pagan

¹ Compare Hettinger, *Apologie des Christenthums*, II, 216, 223, 275—277.

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principle: Magnanimous is he who tolerates neither injury nor insult.¹ But, as soon as the word of Christ was heard on the cross: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!" Christ becomes the center of love and the motive of heroic sacrifices. Let us not pursue this truth any farther, but return to our question: Is the Catholic Church indeed that sole institution, in which we can obtain supernatural union with God? Mysterious and exalted as the Catholic Church is above every mind, in herself and in her doctrines, still we must answer the question, though it be only to explain those heterogeneous phenomena which we encounter in the world since the entrance of Christianity.

Brethren, all religions and sects outside the Catholic Church bear the mark of Cain on their foreheads, which proves that they cannot be that "Bride" which the Lord secured for Himself on the cross through the precious Blood. It is the discord caused by Adam's sin and which has passed upon all men. Could this discord possibly have God for its author, since unity forms an essential mark of all His works? No, indeed not! man himself is the cause of it; upon the separation of man from God, the highest principle, followed naturally the division and discord in man himself: the flesh rebelled against the spirit. And whatever is found in the individual, is also

¹ Aristoteles, *Anal. post.* II, 13.

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found in the life of the human family, the universality of individual men. The combat of the individual shows itself in the whole human race, aye, the history of the world is nothing else than the history of wars and rebellions. Just as Christ became our Redeemer by destroying the separation between God and man, caused by the guilt of the latter, so, too, must true religion, if it is to satisfy the purpose for which it was founded: the continuation of the work of the redemption through Christ, the destruction of the disunion between God and all men who are united with her, and consequently also the destruction of the discord of man within himself. This is demanded of true religion. But do the churches and sects, separated from the Catholic Church, destroy this division? And if not, can any one of them possibly be the salutary institution, connection with which is required by Jesus Christ for the attainment of supernatural union with God? No — for their own inner division proves positively that they cannot have God for their Father. From sin originated the multiplicity and diversity of religions, whereas from the sanctity and unity of God came into existence the unity of religion and the worship of God. What is really the condition of the Protestant Church about which we are mainly here concerned? If ever, then precisely here is the heraclitean theory justified, that all things are in a con-

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stant flux of becoming and perishing, but nothing is permanent. The history of Protestantism is simply a history of continual change and permanent discord, aye, it is simply a contradiction to designate it by a common name, since, for instance, in the United States alone there are more than seventy different sects, each completely independent, and each has its own organization.¹ But are the adherents of, at least, each individual sect united among themselves? Not even this. Of them might well be said what Tertullian, in the third century, said of the heretics of his time: "*Division is their unity.* They differ among themselves in their doctrines, since each one forms his at will, according to what he has been taught, just as his teacher formed his own according to his taste. Finally, if you examine these heresies thoroughly, you will find that all have deviated from their founders on many points. The most of them have no churches, and are without a mother, without an authoritative chair, have no faith, and exiled they wander about, as it were, without a home."²

¹ Compare *Kirchenlexicon von Wetzer und Welte*, X, 532; *ibid.*, "to enumerate all sects is impossible." And V, 1450 sqq.

² *De praescript. c. 42.* The same teacher already meets the objection which the Protestants of this day raise: It is through investigation that we must arrive at truth. Tertullian truly says that Christianity is something not to be searched after on the wearisome path of philosophy, but it is something that is granted, which, being perceived by Faith, at once

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But a religion that is divided in itself, necessarily divides its adherents among themselves. Since it is incapable of solving its own difficulties and differences, how can it do this for others? In order to create unity and order in others, we must first possess it ourselves. Just as paganism created in the minds of men a complete dissension, for the pagan could not know whether by giving honor to one God he did not offend twenty thousand other divine beings, so, too, does the believer in every religion outside the Catholic Church remain divided in himself, unrestful and uncertain, because he does not know which religion is precisely the true one, nor what he is to believe, or rather, since the separation between him-solves all questions, which relate to our eternal destiny. Faith alone enables the inquiring mind to arrive at its end and the desired rest. "We need," says he, "ever since the days of Christ no more subtle investigations (*i.e.*, in regard to the questions just indicated) . . . for this is my principle: One thing, and that something certain, was ordained by Christ, which the nations have to believe and, therefore, to seek in order that, having found it, they can believe it. But whatever is determined as common and of itself certain, cannot be a subject of endless investigation. We must seek until we find, but believe as soon as we have found, and then nothing more is to be done than to hold fast to that which has been perceived by Faith." *Ibid.*, c. 7 and 9. Compare Moehler, *Patrol.*, s. 737ff. That which Tertullian maintained fifteen hundred years ago as Catholic doctrine, the Catholic Church has recently affirmed herself in these words: "The doctrines of Faith, which God has revealed are not submitted to the human mind for farther investigation as an excogitated philosophical system, but as a divine dower conferred by Christ upon His Bride." *Con. Vat. De fide et revelat.* c. 4 (Denziger, *Enchir.* n. 1647).

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self and God is not removed by the religion which he professes, therefore, neither is his own mind settled. But a religion which can accomplish nothing, can impossibly be the true one, for that is precisely its task if it be the “Bride” of Him, who upon the cross united Heaven and earth, and as a farewell gift left it His peace. Need we, therefore, be surprised at the numerous conversions to the Catholic Church of non-Catholics? What are their principle motives? mainly the disunion and the interior unrest which they feel within themselves, and which gives them no moment’s peace until they are received into the ark of the new Covenant — into the Catholic Church. And, indeed, is it not a contradiction to read in the beginning and the end of the Gospel the words: “Peace be with you;”¹ and yet, in spite of this, to find, even with the most honest disposition, within ourselves nothing less than peace and order, but, instead thereof, discord and unrest? Therefore it is that the father of modern romance, Novalis,² cries from the depth of his heart: “The Catholic Church alone can resuscitate Europe and again reconcile all nations.”

But, can we not arrive at the same conclusion, in some other way, that no Church but the Catholic

¹ Luke I, 79; II, 14; XXIV, 36; John XIV, 27; XX, 21.

² Compare Eichendorff, *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands*, II, s. II.

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can possibly be the above-mentioned institution? Yes, indeed, and since the investigation is of the utmost importance, we shall spare no pains in pursuing this course. The following consideration will put our former investigation into a much clearer light.

II. The Supernatural Origin of the Church

To the question of the pagan judge: "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" Christ answered: "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from hence." Pilate did not comprehend this language, and asked once more: "Art Thou a King then?" (John XVIII, 33, 36, 37.) Christ answered two things by these words: first, that He is a King of a kingdom, and secondly, that this kingdom is not of this world. Let us consider especially the second point.

It is an undeniable fact that every kingdom is based on power. It is the inalienable foundation of every state, the beginning and end of it. Without power there can be no kingdom, for it is necessary both within and without. With the surrendering of power a kingdom surrenders its own existence. But can the kingdom of Christ possibly dispense with power? Even it is formed by conquest — all nations

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of every part of the globe should dwell like one great family in the embrace of this kingdom, and it must maintain itself impregnable against all attacks. Does this not require power? This kingdom is destined to outlive all other kingdoms of the earth, and all princes and kings of the earth are to be its children. Like a huge tree it is to overshadow the earth so that all nations of the earth may find shelter therein. For this purpose, does it not require greater power than any other kingdom? And from what source is this power to come? Shall it be able to dispose of well-equipped armies? "If My kingdom were of this world," says the King of this kingdom, "My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews." Or shall it be founded by the power of some mighty State? But has not the State persecuted the kingdom of Christ from the very beginning? It was founded by Christ without any concession on the part of the State, and He Himself had to hear before Pilate the accusation of high treason. (John XIX, 12.) And, pray, what benefit would a military or a state-power be to this kingdom, if, to be true to its destiny, it is to outlive all kingdoms of the earth, which are primarily based on such a power?

But possibly this kingdom does not exist at all? On the contrary, it is spread all over the world; it has taken into its bosom all nations of the earth, and

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has outlived all states and kingdoms; it alone remains intact amidst the most colossal revolutions during the past nineteen centuries, amidst the innumerable changes in which the nations assumed the most varied forms and shapes. Whilst all States suffered the loss of their power in the course of time, the power of this kingdom remained the same; to-day it is the same it was in the beginning. And where is this kingdom? Need we search for it a long time? History points to the Catholic Church alone which during the past nineteen hundred years has repelled most successfully all the attacks of its fiercest enemies of a most varied kind. It has remained the same after sustaining a most cruel persecution of three hundred years' duration, when blood flowed in streams, when the prisons of the world were swarming with Christians and thirteen millions suffered death for Faith in Christ. And when the time had arrived in which the most powerful work of the ancient world, the Roman imperial power, because it was the work of man, yielded to incessant decay, then it was that this same Church arose and came forth victorious from the ruins, because she was invincible in the face of every hostile power, and was the leader, the only beacon of light in the universal darkness of night. But did the Catholic Church become weak when the most powerful enemy of Christ's name arose in the East, Islam-

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ism, which antagonized the Church for nearly one thousand years in the East, South, and West, with an ever-renewed fury and an ever-growing power? The power of the Ottoman dominion is broken to-day and the Catholic Church has gathered in the combat against it fresh laurels and trophies of victory. And how did those powers fare that attacked her in subsequent warfares, of which there never was a dearth? Did she not, like a powerful anvil, crush them beneath her weight? All things were weak and powerless in the combat against the Church. She alone was always victorious, no difference in what zone of the heavens she was compelled to enter in combat against her foes. And thus the Catholic Church alone, according to the words of Ventura, stands erect amidst broken scepters, amidst diadems stripped of their laurels, amidst thrones overturned and seats of learning that are crumbling into dust, she stands like a column of Trajan amidst the ruins of the Trajan forum; she alone fills all the centuries since the appearance of Christ upon earth by a continuity which can never be disputed against her. Is this not the strongest proof of her divine origin? From the very law of cause and effect it follows, necessarily, that the work of man can destroy man, for man does not surpass man, he is his equal in essence which is the origin of his activity. With the same power with which a man can produce an effect, another man

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can, alone or jointly with other men, destroy it. But since the Catholic Church, in spite of all possible efforts of men, emerged from all persecutions, as we have just seen, as the one unchangeable, and always remained victor over her opponents, because she survived all of them, whereas in the everlasting change of things so many of the old States went down to ruin, therefore she proves most conclusively that she is not the work of men, but the work of Him of whom Origen said: "He who fully investigates history will be convinced that Jesus Christ undertook that which exceeds human nature, and whatever He undertook He also accomplished."¹ This compels us to draw the conclusion with the same author that the Catholic Church is an evidence of a divinely creative power, in such a manner that God is her Founder."²

But if this be true, then we may no longer choose between the proposed alternative: Either the Church

¹ *Contra Celsum*, I, 27.

² In this sense the Vatican Council says; *De fide et ratione*, c. 3. (Denziger, *Enchir.* n. 1642): "Ecclesia per se ipsa, ob suam nempe admirabilem propagationem, eximiam sanctitatem et inexhaustam in omnibus bonis foecunditatem, ob Catholicam unitatem, invictamque stabilitatem, magnum quoddam et perpetuum est motivum credibilitatis et divinae suaे legislationis testimonium irrefragabile." The Church is of herself, on account of her admirable propagation, extraordinary sanctity and in all things that are good inexhaustible fecundity, and on account of her Catholic unity and invincible stability, a grand and perpetual motive of credibility and of her divine legislation a most irrefragable witness."

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does not exist, or, if she does exist, is she of a divine origin? The Catholic Church does exist with all the marks of that kingdom of Christ; of her alone are true the words of Christ: "My kingdom is not of this world." Neither her origin nor her power is of this earth — she is a direct, divine institution.¹

And thus it must be if she is to attain the end for which she was founded, which end is not a worldly

¹ Here we encounter a most remarkable fact, which, however, after the above explanation, upon closer examination loses much of its surprising character. Every non-Catholic church has temporal power for its basis and exists only as long as the temporal power is at its command. And since it does not exceed material force, force does not frighten it either in its foundation or in its maintenance. I refer you, as an example, to the Mohammedan, the Russian or to the Protestant religions. Every history of the world will give you their story. But even their own adherents will not deny, in the least, the fact that the religion which they profess can only exist by means of the temporal power. In the first German parliament the Protestant Count of Eulenburg said among others: "I speak mainly of the Protestant Church, which has a different position than that of the Catholic. Where is the Protestant Church? I only know her in the institutions of the State. I would like to ask, where is really the Protestant Church outside of the State? I have never met her. All the churchly institutions are based purely on the institutions of the State and are by law considered the most holy interests by the officers of the State. Then has the Church its protection if left in the hands of the power of the State." Another said: "The Evangelical Church cannot exist without the State, she would split into innumerable sects. But in regard to the Catholic Church, I can readily imagine that she can not only tolerate separation from the State, but rather wishes it." And what is the state of the so-called "Old Catholics?" Did not one of them say, in a public meeting at Munich: "We need, above all things, money, and again money, to attain the pro-

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one, nor one that is merely intellectual, but one that is supernatural: the attainment of the supernatural union of man with God. We are not in a natural but a supernatural order of the world, and therefore a mere natural or worldly origin of the Church would be simply a contradiction with herself.

But some one might object saying: The Catholic Church was at various times clothed with temporal power. Yes, but there is a vast difference between being founded on temporal power or rather having a terrestrial origin, and, after her foundation to possess such temporal power, after the human race or at least a great portion thereof had already become Christian. Just at a time when, according to all human calculation, the temporal power seemed indispensable to the Church, in her foundation, she did not only not possess it, but the power of the world sought to crush and to annihilate the Church. Christ Jesus, her divine Founder, was crucified, His disciples were martyred, and the whole Church was cruelly persecuted during three hundred years. And after the lapse of centuries did not the Church oftener appear stripped of all worldly power, without any protection and absolutely defenseless, exposed to all

posed purpose, and for this reason, that we may hire priests who, as the disciples of the Lord, may go out into the world and preach the Gospel." Did not this late sect appeal constantly and everywhere to the temporal powers as to its guardians?

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the attacks of her enemies? If she were not of divine origin, if the word of Christ were not true of her: "My kingdom is not of this world," she, too, would have long ago been buried in peace like the many powers which she has survived.

III. The Supernatural Constitution of the Church

But Jesus Christ said before the pagan judge that He is the King of this kingdom: My kingdom is not of this earth. This point is as important as is the former, and is most intimately connected with it. In the kingdom of God upon earth Jesus Christ is the sole invisible King. Hereby we enter into the interior of the Church. Though this truth appears to our carnal senses as incomprehensible as it did to Pilate, who asked Jesus the second time: "Art Thou not a king then?" still, in its conclusions it is most clear to our eyes, and we surely must be blind if we do not see it. Let us concentrate our thoughts most closely in order that we may well weigh these conclusions. We do not, of course, as yet speak of the full idea of the constitution of the Church; but we are engaged upon its most important part, with the divine or supernatural, in virtue of which alone the Church is enabled to fulfil her task.

A constitution of a kingdom must, in the first place, be commensurate with its origin. — The Catholic

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Church, according to our position, is the kingdom of Christ on earth; her origin is immediately divine; she is not a creation of the Jewish or the Greek mind, and therefore she demands also a divine direction, and this is supplied by Him, as we shall see in the fourth discourse, and have already partially seen, who is her Founder Christ Jesus. Constitution and origin are therefore combined in her most inseparably.

A constitution must, in the second place, be commensurate with the greatness of the country.—How extensive are the boundaries of the Church? The inheritance of the Messiah, as we have shown in the second discourse, are all the nations of the earth, and the limits of His kingdom are the ends of the terrestrial globe; for Christ must reign over all. As widely as the reign of Christ extends over the earth, so widely does also the royal power of the Church extend; for He has established her in His rights. What other monarch than Christ Jesus does the Church, according to her higher inheritance, desire?

A constitution of a kingdom must, thirdly, be commensurate with the history, the peculiarity of manners, the degree of culture and all other characteristics of a nation.—After having considered the other two points more hurriedly, this one deserves, since it is the most important and embraces the two former, our undivided attention. If anything, this is precisely the touchstone of the true Church. National-

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ties are as little the work of chance, or the product of a blindly controlling force of nature as is, in general, the variety in creation. The diversification and variety in nature, free or not free, belong to the beauty of the universe, and are ordained as such by the Creator and reflect, in a manner, the infinite perfection of God, which would scarcely be the case in a kind of a deadlike monotony without variety.¹ As every individual man, so, too, has every nation in the great world-plan of Divine Providence some peculiar task to perform, some mission to fulfil, which occupies a proper relation to its eternal destiny in heaven. Whether the nation grasps this task or fails to recognize it, — the task always remains the same. It is determined by the character of the people, by the limits which nature and the environments establish, by its peculiar culture and endowment. According to the different characteristics of nations their history is also formed, which accordingly will differ among individual nations as these nations differ among themselves. But from all this it follows that every nation has an original right to move freely within certain limits, and that the suppression of this right is a crime against the established order of God.²

¹ See St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.* II, c. 45; St. Bonaventure 2, dist. 9, a. 1. 9. 8. Compare the Sixth Discourse.

² Doellinger, *Kirche und Kirchen*, s. 19.

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Brethren, we have just remarked that the Church hath received the nations of the earth as her inheritance, in order to lead them to their supernatural end. Therefore she must deal with every imaginable peculiarity of nations. For, since all men are called to supernatural happiness, and are redeemed by Christ, so all nations must likewise find admission into her bosom. No continent nor island, no mountain nor valley, no ocean nor river, no zone nor any part of the world can place a limit to the Church in this regard. To whatever manner of living man may belong is absolutely indifferent to her; of whatever descent they be, whether Greek or Roman, German or Slav — all without exception are called to be co-citizens in the Kingdom of Christ.¹ In spite of the diversity of the peculiarities of manners and degree of culture the Church, for reasons above given, must do justice to every peculiarity; she must not interfere with the liberty of nations. What a grand task indeed! which grows in enormity if we consider that the true Church, to be true to her mission must do justice at the same time not only to the peculiarities of the nations of this or that time, but of all nations in general, from the Orient to the Occident, from North to South, from one age to another, and that, moreover, one and the same con-

¹ Doellinger, *Kirche und Kirchen*, s. 19 and Phillips, *Kirchenrecht* II, s. 384.

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stitution from her very foundation to the end of all time, must be common and suitable to all nations. It is an acknowledged fact that it is a difficult if not an almost impossible task for any State to bind nations into a union which differ in language and manners, in religion and degree of culture, without injuring their liberty and nationality. But what are all these demands compared to the task of the Church? And has she not solved this difficulty? Yes, indeed, she has done this in a manner in which she alone could possibly have done it. Why could she alone do justice to this task?

Brethren, I maintain that only that power can do justice to any and every imaginable peculiarity of nations at all times and everywhere, only that power can respond to the history of every people, which has a supernatural aim and origin, and the constitution of which is, consequently, exalted above every nationality, and the ruler of which is superior to every individual peculiarity of the people. Now, who is this ruler? There is but one — God — who at the same time founded this power and created the nations with all their peculiarities, who governs them and has assigned to them in His design the task which they are to fulfil here upon earth. Only one can accomplish this — He who does not direct men as slaves, but has given them, with their nature, liberty and the use thereof.

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But in which kingdom is God this ruler? Most assuredly only in that which can show a divine origin and aim. Yes, the Catholic Church is this miraculous work; she alone is that power, which, because she possesses all the enumerated qualifications, does justice to the above-mentioned task. Have we not abundant proof of this? If the Church is truly Catholic, then she must be of divine origin, and God is her inmost source of life and the reverse. For, what does the name Catholic mean? Nothing but "universal," for all time, for all places and conditions, in a word: encircling the whole world. No church but the Catholic can in truth claim this name. And why does she merit it? Because she alone, as we have seen, on account of her supernatural aim, has a direct divine foundation. Not she has formed herself out of the history of any people or of any particular nation, on the contrary, she has, ever since her entrance into the world, formed the history of nations, preserving at the same time their national independence. With a power by no means human, she conquered the wild manners of the barbarians, and changed them into a moral people. She conquered the Germans and founded their culture, she renewed the Romans, converted the Slavs and elevated all nations to the height of morals, of science and of arts, from which, at all times they again descended after separation

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from the Church. She suits all ages and all conditions, and every researcher in history must admit the truth of my assertion that the turning-point for the better of every single nation, during the past nineteen hundred years, was alone its connection with the Catholic Church. She became all to all, she entered into every nation to educate it without doing violence to it, to refine and to strengthen it, without the least danger of destroying it. But how could she have accomplished this had she not been *universal*, but only national, or if she displayed in her views, institutions and morals only a national banner? As the eye, in order to receive within itself all colors, must itself be colorless, as even the ancients observed, so also must that institution, which is destined to receive within its bosom the people of various degrees of culture and peculiarities of manners, and conduct them to their supernatural end, bear no impression of any peculiar nationality, so that it may do justice to every peculiarity of every people. According to its supernatural mission it cannot be national.¹ But if it be not *national* then it must have God for its King, for every man belongs

¹ The answer of Lacordaire to the objection that he served an alien potentate (the Pope) is well known: My master is nowhere an alien, for he is the master of all. Denifle: The remarks of the same are most correct: "The Church can really be in contradiction to the government of a country; but the government of a country is not the nation, and much less, the fatherland." *Letters*, p. 80. See Commer, *Kirche*, I, s. 238.

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to some people or society, since society is co-eval with man.

This determines the position of all non-Catholic churches. They are, of course, most anxiously engaged, like the Catholic Church, to be everywhere, but because they are not of divine origin, nor have God for their King, all their efforts fail; they may possibly be everywhere as error is everywhere, even in the utmost bounds of the earth; but they are everywhere different and contradictory, as we have seen above, and nowhere one and the same. This is but natural, for the cutting loose from the universal Church has always its source in the particular interests of nations; the establishment of a national Church was the one idea flitting before their mind's eye. But hereby is not only the supernatural origin denied, but the supernatural aim is most consequentially abandoned, which, we repeat, does not primarily intend the temporal and particular interest, but the attainment of the supernatural destiny of all men.

The Catholic Church alone is, therefore, that institution which Jesus Christ has founded for the continuation of the work of redemption upon earth. She alone is not a child of time; she alone bears no mark of any particular people, but rather we saw "her coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Does she not herein appear completely like her divine Founder? He is, it is

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true, also a man, born of woman, and living among men, but His whole person, His whole life bears the imprint of the supernatural. He does not dissolve Himself into a mere national character. And was it not necessary that He, the God-man, should possess this characteristic, because He came into the world precisely to be the mediator not simply between some particular men or people, but between God and all the people of the earth? And since He had nothing common with any typical character, and rose above every national representation, therefore He can appear to every man as the type of each man's particularly honored excellence. "And in truth, if we consider how He can be to the Greek, though not a founder of any of his sects, an object of imitation, to the Brahman, though preached to him by men who came forth from the fisherman's boat, an object of veneration; to the red Indian of Canada, though belonging to the hated white race, an object of adoration — then we can impossibly ignore His destiny, to cultivate every diversity of color or form, of physiognomy and of manners, in themselves the type of unity, to which all the children of Adam belong, and to give us in the possibility of this moral unity the strongest proof that the human race, in all its diversity, is nevertheless essentially *one*,"¹ and that all have the same destiny. And as Christ Jesus

¹ Wiseman: *Science and Revelation*, p. 230.

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could do this only as God-man, so, too, is the Catholic Church alone enabled to accomplish the above-mentioned task as a divine-human institution.

The constitution of a power must, in the fourth place, be commensurate with the political conditions of the neighboring States. — The Church is indeed not a State within a State. She is not of this earth. But she is within the States for the sake of the whole world. She has no politics, because not a State within a State, but, in virtue of her supernatural mission, she has a certain relation to the State wherein she exists. If, therefore we ask: If therefore the Church is of a direct divine origin, and Christ Jesus is her one invisible King, what relation does she therefore bear to the State, and is this relation adapted to the constitution of the Church and the State wherein she exists? I answer that, first and above all, the Church is superior to the State. This proposition, according to our former exposition, scarcely requires any farther demonstration. Should not the Church, which is engaged in the last and supernatural end of mankind, be superior to the State which has only the material well-being of its subjects primarily in view? Even a child which understands the respective aims of the Church and State would find this proposition most reasonable. Or should there possibly exist between the two a contradiction? But this is in itself, since both the

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Church and the State are of a divine origin — the Church directly and the State indirectly — as impossible as is a contradiction between Faith and reason, because both of these have likewise their origin in God, who on the one hand reveals the mysteries and infuses Faith, and on the other hand has given to the human mind the light of reason. We maintain that the above proposition is absolutely correct, and we apply to that supposed contradiction between Church and State what the Vatican Council¹ says in reference to a supposed contradiction between Faith and reason: “Every supposed contradiction of this sort is a vain assumption, and has its foundation mainly herein, that, either the doctrines of Faith have not been understood and explained in the sense of the Church, or imaginary opinions are taken as a result of reasonable thought.”

As early as the third century Origen maintained the above proposition against Celsus.² This philosopher was filled with the Epicurean and Stoic idea of the State, as if it were something absolute and divine; and he maintained that Christianity is condemnable precisely on account of its revolutionary aims, *since it placed itself in contradiction to the existing laws of the State and wished to elevate itself above these.* The same accusation of to-day! —

¹ *De fide et ratione*, c. 4. (Denziger, *Enchir.* n. 1645.)

² *Contra Cels.* lib. 5. Compare Moehler, *Patrol.* p. 511.

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Origen, however, replied to him that, if the Providence and government of God over the world is acknowledged, then the laws of the State cannot claim an absolute but only a conditional value, and can only then demand obedience and inasmuch as the only absolute law — that of God — is not in contradiction thereto. But in case of such a contradiction it is as reasonable as it is natural that the laws of the State must yield to the divine law. Now, let us apply this answer to our proposition. The Church appears before the State as a direct divine foundation. She proves herself to be that power which has received from her divine Founder and King the mission, on account of the supernatural destiny of all men, to subject all men to herself, all human societies and all States. She appears on the way of salvation as the only teacher and guide of all, of subject and of ruler; she shows her credentials and her seal — and the “modern State” opposes her in these words: *Non serviam — I will not serve.* Or, is the Catholic Church possibly no longer to-day the same to which, through his disciples, her divine Founder said: “Going, therefore, teach ye all nations.” (Matt. XXVIII, 19.) Is He possibly no longer her King? of whom it was said: Christ must reign over all men? But we read nowhere that the Founder of the Catholic Church might have said that after fifteen or eighteen hundred years He

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would destroy, to the very foundation, this edifice of which “He Himself is the chief corner-stone,” and which during these centuries has “grown to be a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephes. II, 20, 21), and that He would erect a new temple, according to a new plan, which should have a different mission from that of the original. On the contrary, to-day as ever the words that He addressed to Peter are true: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. XVI, 18.) And thus it must ever be! Since God has never revoked His resolve of the vocation of men to a supernatural destiny and never will revoke it, and, in order to attain it, the grace of redemption must be administered to men to-day as well as at any other time, so, too, is the destiny of the Church to-day no other than it was in the days of her foundation. With the same divine vocation as ever, to redeem mankind from sin, and to accomplish man’s supernatural union with God, so, too, does she appear to-day before princes and people, before States and powers and she demands their humble submission. As truly as the supernatural is above the natural and grace above nature, and since the last end, which we attain only, ordinarily, through the Church, is supernatural, so certainly does the Church excel the State. The Church is necessary precisely on account of the supernatural order of the world.

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Behold, Brethren, the mystery of iniquity! In the first discourse we were already convinced that the tendency of our age is the apostasy from God. Here is its confirmation. The “modern State” acknowledges no superior to itself; it is its own law and aim, in a word, it is the *divine will* in its own eyes. In the Catholic Church it recognizes another power opposed to it in a commanding attitude; she manifests herself higher and stronger than it; she claims its submission, and it — the State — acknowledges no superior to itself! The Church commands it by the power of divine authority — but the “modern State” knows no God but itself, and with Pharaoh replies to the Church: “Who is the Lord that I should hear his voice?” (Exod. V, 2.) Indeed, this is the mystery of iniquity! The “modern State” hates the Church, because it hates God. As a purely human institution it could possibly tolerate the Catholic Church; therefore it favors all non-Catholic Churches and religious associations, it regards them with a kind of benevolence, and only regrets that they so seldom take foothold; but as a divine foundation the Catholic Church becomes intolerable to it. In truth, not the doctrines of the Catholic Church, not her discipline, not the exterior forms and usages animated by the inner spirit, not these cause the modern Statesmen to make a common attack upon the Church — these are all merely vain pretenses, the

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same as the dogma of Papal infallibility served them years ago for such an attack. What matters it to them whether the Pope, in matters of Faith, be infallible or not, since they have not the slightest faith in the Christian truths? The inmost reason of their hatred of the Church is, rather, their long ago accomplished apostasy from God. This is the reason why the political, social and domestic life is withdrawn from the influence of the Church, and politics and right and morals, the morals of religion, the family, the school and the State have been separated from the Church. But does the State attain its purpose through its opposition to the Church? Most certainly not, and without willing it, it only succeeds in manifesting to the thoughtful man the supernatural, and, therefore, higher authority of the Church.¹

Now the second proposition also becomes clear: *Because the Catholic Church is, in herself, superior to the State, therefore, she justly claims, within her own boundaries, full liberty and independence.* To desire to bind and to limit her power is rebellion against the design of God, who desires to lead all

¹ Pope Leo XIII traces in a striking manner the attack upon the Church to the instigations of the evil one, of him "who in the very beginning refused to render service to the Most High; and, therefore, the world feels within itself a scorn for law and its announcer, who comes to it in the name of God, and this it does from a spirit of independence to which the world has no claim." Encycl. 19 March, 1902.

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men through her to salvation; it is a revolt against the emphatic command of Christ: "Go and teach all nations." (Matt. XXVIII, 19.) It is an injustice that cries to heaven, against the nations of the world, which, in virtue of the emphatic command of Christ, are obliged to hear and to believe in the doctrines of the Church. If Christ Jesus is the King of this kingdom; if He must reign over all men, then a limitation to the liberty and the independence of the Church on part of the earthly rulers is nothing less than the hindrance of the spreading of the kingdom of the lawful ruler of the world.¹ But this crying

¹ Incalculable is the damage which grows out of the limitation of the liberty of the Church, not only to the Church herself, but naturally also to the State. One of these evils, and by no means the least, which result therefrom is the deterioration of the morals of the people, the relaxation of the discipline and the scandal to the faithful. C. L. Haller (*Restaur. der Staatswissenschaft*, V. P. 213) says most truthfully: "How can the Church possibly prevent or correct abuses that creep in, or control the observance of her wise laws and ordinances, secure the fulfilment of the duties of all the servants of the Church, if the mild authority of the head of the Church is no longer recognized and no longer finds support among temporal rulers? When a Bishop can no longer admonish a pastor or a priest who may have transgressed the laws of the Church or may give scandal, either in doctrine or conduct, nor is permitted to remove him from his position, nor prevent him from exercising the sacerdotal functions, or may visit upon him any other punishment without being compelled to answer before the temporal and often an ignorant court, or one ill-disposed towards the Church, through protracted, expensive and unbecoming processes and, in the end, is exposed to the danger of being rebuked or even punished for fulfilling his duties and thereby becomes disgraced before the eyes of a Christian people! If,

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injustice becomes greater, if we consider that in the actual order of the world, the supernatural or Christian, the temporal, with all the temporal States and powers, should serve to advance the Catholic Church, which is to mediate between the natural and the supernatural, and is the necessary preliminary condition of the supernatural welfare of all nations.

But since it is the task of the Catholic Church to lead humanity to its supernatural destiny, *there are*, consequently, *some affairs in which the Catholic Church does not meddle either directly nor indirectly*

therefore, the discipline of the Church is relaxed and many abuses and evils arise therefrom, surely it is not the fault of the Church, but of those who have made the fulfilment of her discipline an impossibility. In their blindness they fail to reflect that thereby they undermine respect for their own rights, they deprive themselves of a mighty protection and will surely fail to command any longer obedience if they themselves favor and encourage disloyalty and disobedience." And in a note he makes these remarks, most worthy of consideration: "To-day the same happens to kings and rulers which they so often did to the Church. They are robbed of all power, under the pretense that they might abuse it, and then they are accused of the consequences of their weakness. They are expected to promote everything that is good and to prevent all evil; they are held responsible for every abuse and every neglect, but the means necessary for this are denied them. May they learn from this that neither they nor their people can prosper until they concede to the Church her rights again, and that they, too, have a Master above them — the Supreme Legislator, but only this one — and no other besides Him — who speaks however, mainly through the voice of His Church." Almost every country can furnish some proof of punishment for such outrages against the Church.

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by creating an impediment to the State, but she rather extends a helping hand.

This proposition is also as clear as the two preceding. The Church is not primarily engaged in temporal affairs, but in matters that are eternal, and if she is at all engaged in the former, this is solely in as far as it relates to the eternal. Therefore it is that all forms of government, under which the people may live, are entirely immaterial to her, be they monarchical or republican.¹ She never dreams of occupying herself with the inner political affairs and laws of the State as long as these are not in conflict with the eternal salvation of the subjects, and she is not the least inclined to impede the progress of natural sciences, each in their own sphere, to maintain their principles and trend, and she will never oppose them as long as they do not come in conflict with divine doctrine. On the contrary, instead of freeing the subjects of the ties which bind them to their lawful superiors, she will rather fasten them more tightly and establish the civil rulers more firmly. Of what avail is the most powerful military force to the State if it does not possess true authority

¹ Formally expressed by Pope Leo XIII. "The Church finds the dominion of one or more not improper, provided it be just and solicitous about the general welfare. If, therefore, justice is not violated it is permitted all nations to select such form of government as may be best suited for their character, manners or customs of long standing." Encycl. on the *Origin of Civil Power*.

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in the eyes of the subjects? It alone secures for princes and rulers obedience and respect, the two most firm supports of union, order and power. But who is it that establishes above all others the authority of princes and kings and rulers, and through them that of the States, who secures for them obedience and love, if not the Catholic Church, in whose eyes law is the will of God, and the ruler God's representative? Ever since her foundation the Church has not ceased to admonish incessantly the faithful in the words of the Apostle: "Let every soul be subject to higher power: for there is no power but from God: and those that are ordained are of God." (Rom. XIII, 1.) M. Aurelius Claudius was the first of the pagan Roman empire, who, after eighteen emperors, did not die a violent death. If such terrible conditions no longer prevail among us, is this not mainly due to the merits of the Catholic Church?¹ Man, thus reasoned the pagan, is too little and miserable to be honored as such by man. The Church does not contradict this principle, but in her eyes the ruler is not only man, but he is the *representative of God*: "As the servants of Christ . . . with a good will serving, as to the Lord, and not to men." (Ephes.

¹ What kind of fate awaits the heads of States where no longer faith, but infidelity controls the minds, is shown by the sad fate of Czar Alexander, of a king Humbert of Italy, of the two Presidents Carnot and McKinley, of the Servian royal couple, and last but not least, of that noble Christian — the Empress Elizabeth.

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VI, 6, 7.) Therefore, the ruler never lived longer nor enjoyed the love of his subjects more than since the foundation of the Church and under her influence. As the Church gathers roots in States, in the same measure does the temporal power grow stronger and the reverse. If the authority of rulers is not protected by this power through the Catholic Church, then the ruler is on the road to ruin; then there is no other means to secure respect for himself, and the law than mere force; but this does not beget love and respect, but fear.¹ As long as subjects are held together by fear and force, things may go on for a while, but as soon as the people shake off this fear, as soon as it opposes force to force, what then? Like a rapid mountain-stream it will become unchained and pull down everything in its course and leave behind it only traces of destruction and of tears and of blood. What would have become of the fifth century after Christ if Catholic authority had not come to the assistance of the weakness of the civil power? It is entirely due to her that in those days, in spite of the greatness of the disorder, no anarchy followed in its train.

To whom must we ascribe the fact that in our days we see temporal authority so little respected? I think I have already given the answer above.² It

¹ See Ravignan, *Conf.* I, 222.

² See note 22 of the Second Discourse.

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is the State (I mean the “modern State”) that weakens its own authority. It revolts against the supreme authority, against God; it ignores Him; it deifies itself and forces this view upon its subjects. And what follows? As of old, so may it be said to-day: “Man is the equal of man.” Such is the language of the “modern State,” also in regard to God, and such, too, is the language of the subject to the State: *non serviam* — I will not serve. And as the modern State revolts against God, so does it likewise revolt against the Church of God. But again you see the same result and the verification of the saying: “With certainty it may be predicted that, if the government does not adhere closely to the Church, not a single throne will remain standing in Europe. When the blowing of the storm will begin, of which the Spirit of God speaketh, then they will be blown into ruins like chaff and dry dust.”¹ Does this saying, after so many sad experiences, require any further proof? The simple logical conclusion of things leads to this condition. The necessary foundation and support of States is religion.²

¹ La Mennais, *De la religion cons. dans ses rapp. avec l'ord. pol.* — Rohrbacher, *Universal History*, I, p. XLIV.

² The same idea is expressed by Leo XIII in the Encycl. on the *Origin of Civil Power* (II, 202): “Fear,” says St. Thomas, “is a weak argument. Therefore there must be a more effective motive offered for obedience and we must be firmly convinced that even the severity of the laws will remain ineffectual, if we are not determined by a sense of duty and

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But in the actual supernatural order of the world the Catholic Church is not a mere chance, nor is she to be regarded as something exterior or alien to religion; it is the order of the world, and since Redemption was accomplished through Christ, she is as necessary as her divine Founder, and she is not a religion opposed to another, but she is precisely — *the religion*.

Brethren, what we need mostly is — the renewal of the Catholic consciousness of Faith. A great thought must animate us, and ever hover over us in all our actions — this is: *I am a Catholic*. It is not enough to view the Catholic Church with purely esthetic eyes, *i.e.*, to regard her as the grandest and most beautiful historical manifestation of the world, and then to withdraw ourselves from her influence; her spirit must seize us in our inmost being and penetrate all our powers and faculties. Then we will possess the fulness of character and determination, which the world needs so much to-day. What otherwise will it benefit to have lived? The days of indecision are over, both for the enemies of the Church as well as for her friends and children. Catholic opinion can no longer be concealed. The

guided by the fear of God. But to succeed in establishing this fear in the people requires, in the highest degree, religion, which of itself inclines the will of men to be not only subject to their superiors, but to be also attached to them through kindness and love.”

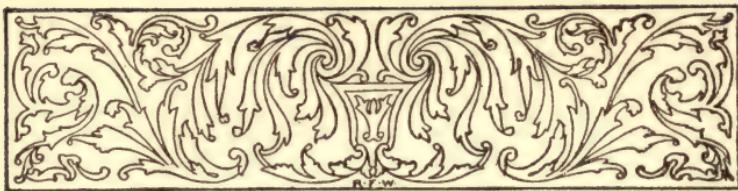
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alternative is forced upon all: Either an open enemy or an open friend of Christ — a child of the Catholic Church. Should this perchance discourage us? We cannot deny it, Catholic life to-day begets no roses; he who to-day is true to the Church, is in a rather defenseless manner exposed to all kinds of vituperations and suspicions, and the higher his position the more intolerable and mournful is life made for him. This is the old tactic of the enemies of the Church; this makes them strong and united, in spite of all the differences in all other things, as even Tertullian said as early as the third century: "Nowhere," said he, "is promotion easier than in the camp of the rebels, where the mere dwelling is considered merit."¹ Oh! how many have already succumbed beneath this heavy temptation! But such doings should not rob us of our courage, with God's grace preventing; we should not therefore yield and adore the God of the "modern State" — the State without God. It is not only the enemy of our eternal happiness, but even a most dangerous enemy of our temporal well-being. It is a most deadly foe of society and of every true State. As true soldiers of Christ we should rather remain steadfast and firm children of the Catholic Church Militant! And though we may not see in this hot combat the dawn of the victory of the Church, still,

¹ *De praescript. c. 41.*

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let us look with confidence to the originator and the finisher of our Faith. His kingdom, the kingdom of His Church, is not of this world, “we saw it coming down out of heaven,” clothed with His glory — the glory of her divine Founder. Can it possibly fail in the combat? Six thousand years did not give humanity the power to destroy even a most tiny mustard-seed, which is blown, comparatively, aimlessly and insignificantly to and fro by the wind; man did not create it, and, therefore, he cannot destroy it. Much less can he destroy that kingdom which Christ established purposely to present to redeemed humanity, through Him, unto the very end of time, the means to attain its eternal destiny. To conquer this kingdom and to destroy it — can this possibly be within the power of the “modern State” — or even of the whole world? *Nevermore.* A strong arm has founded it; a strong arm is stretched forth to protect and guard it against all the attacks of its enemies unto the very end of time. Therefore, Oh! divine Savior, Christ Jesus, we believe that Thou wilst conquer through Thy Church, as truly as we believe that Thou art the Christ — the Son of the living God.



FOURTH DISCOURSE

THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH — (*Continued*)

“Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” — Matt. XVI, 18.

A GREAT work of art is capable of drawing the attention of a great and mixed public; it is even capable of filling its observers with astonishment and admiration. But very few, indeed, can enter into the depth of the thoughts of the artist, from which it came forth, and are capable of understanding the same according to his conception. The essence and truth of things lie not on the surface, but are deeply buried, like jewels deep down in the shaft of the mountain. Only a few are capable of discovering their beauty in all its perfection; the throng remains on the outside and only judges according to the impression made on the senses; but to descend down into the depth it has not the strength nor the courage nor the perseverance required.

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The greatest work of art that ever appeared on earth is the Catholic Church. She excites astonishment and admiration; she presents herself as the greatest and most beautiful historical phenomenon within the period of six thousand years; she is considered, by many of her enemies even, the support, firm as a rock, and the foundation of the moral order of society. But to few, indeed, is the cause of her greatness and the entire fulness of her power discernible. Is this not true? Why was it that at different times, not only the ordinary people, but even men who had fought in the foremost rank against the enemy of the Catholic Church, crossed over into the camp of the enemy and united with the most determined foes of the Church, and were most fierce in their attacks upon her?¹ They considered the Catholic Church still the greatest historical work, but the more they neglected the principle nerve of the life of Christianity — recollection and prayer — the more the inner essence thereof remained concealed to them: *The divine in the human.* And after they had dragged the Church down to the level of a purely human society, she lost in their eyes her value, and the temptation came and they fell away! Thus, the union of the divine with the human constitutes the inner essence of the Church: without the knowledge of this she loses all significance for us.

¹ Remember Tertullian and the fathers of Old-Catholicism.

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“Just as in the one person of Christ Jesus,” says St. Ignatius¹ in the beginning of the second century, “the divinity and humanity are inseparably united, so, too, is the divine and the human inseparably united in the one Church, the inner and the outer, the invisible and the visible.” Therefore, in order that we may penetrate the more deeply into this inner essence, we will continue the subject of our last discourse.

I. The Church — The Teacher of Truth

Man must be in a position to be able to secure a full knowledge and certainty of his last end. This certainty he must be able to possess not only in his matured and advanced age, or only amidst a cultured nation, but even the child and the poorest of servants, who could not possibly have attained the height of the sciences of the age, even these must not be left groping in the dark concerning their eternal destiny. Reason demands this as well as it is a natural longing of the heart that raises them above this terrestrial world. There is nothing, in fact, more important to man than his last end; upon this depends his entire moral life, his complete happiness for time and for eternity. As man must have

¹ *Ad Ephes.* c. 4.—*Ad Magnes*, c. 7, 13. See Moehler, *Patrol.* p. 135 sq.

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complete certainty concerning his destiny, just so must he have the same concerning the means through which it is to be attained. What would it profit us to know our last end, but not the way that leads to it? Both stand in mutual relation to each other, the one is determined by the other.

Brethren! We live in a supernatural order in this world. God has called all of us, in His superabundant bounty, to a destiny which is above the power of every created being to attain, because it is natural to Himself alone. He wishes that we approach Him through a corresponding condition of the supernatural order, that we become partakers of His goods and blessings. In assuming this, does it not appear to us most urgently necessary that we be thoroughly enlightened in this life about this our destiny and concerning the means to attain it? This is most certainly as much a requirement of sound reason as it is a doctrine of Faith. How could this world possibly be a preparation and prerequisite condition for our supernatural completion in heaven, if we knew nothing of this last end and the means to reach it? If, therefore, our last end surpasses the comprehension of our minds, as we have seen in the second discourse, and if the means of this end are necessarily connected therewith by a mutual relation, then the claim of certain knowledge of those truths of God and the divine things which are absolutely

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inaccessible to the human reason, is a most logical one. As the natural order presupposes natural truths and the natural moral law, just so does the supernatural order require supernatural truths and suppositions which are correspondent to this order. But who will provide us with the knowledge of these most necessary truths? where are the teachers to be found?

Brethren, there is a science that justly calls herself the queen of all natural sciences — *Philosophy*. She surpasses all other sciences, for she is at the same time their basis and their keystone. It is she who shapes them into sciences. Without philosophy there are only facts in the natural order, but no inner connection of the same; but where inner connection is lacking there also is lacking the knowledge of the inner causes, without which knowledge there can be no question of science. If we, therefore, show that philosophy is incapable of enlightening us concerning our last end and the means to attain it, then the proof is already given for all other natural sciences.

What is really the keystone for each of the three periods of the history of philosophy? Universal doubt! And what is the starting point of modern philosophy, since the days of Descartes? Methodical doubt! And who is the father of modern philosophy? A chief doubter—Kant! But what is the

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consequence of doubt? Does this question require any farther answer? Since doubt itself is an indecision, does it not mostly lead to complete denial? Most assuredly it does, and, therefore, we find in the history of philosophy the ever-recurring refrain: maintain, doubt, and deny! A study of less than two centuries is sufficient to find this fact confirmed. Doubt annuls truth, questions it, but cannot replace it by anything better. But if doubt calls truth into question, can it possibly enlighten us in regard to truth? And if on religious grounds it is nothing else than absolute indecision on the very highest question of life, can it possibly solve and decide these? And if it cannot do this, which it actually cannot, can it give us that satisfaction which the mind and heart long for? Never! "Religious skepticism admits peace only amidst worldly pleasures, it can only dwell peacefully in the man who, whilst boasting of health and life, considers his last moments extremely distant — when mind must separate from the mortal body in order to pass into another life. But at that moment, when personal existence is endangered, when disease, the herald of death, appears to inform us that the dreaded moment is not far off, then doubt ceases to give satisfaction, and to be comfortable and begins to be frightful. In his moral unbending, man then seeks light, and finds it not; he calls upon faith, but faith does not

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respond; he turns to God, but God is deaf to these his last appeals.”¹ But in order to recognize the void which doubt creates, is even a remembrance of those frightful moments necessary? does man not feel the complete unsatisfactoriness of doubt even amidst the very pleasures of this world? Since we have already touched upon this point in the first discourse, and this is a truth of itself evident, I shall now merely consider an objection which might justly be made. “Doubt,” I hear you say, “can, it is true, not enlighten us upon our last end, for this would contradict its very notion; but the whole of philosophy, most certainly, does not rest upon doubt, nor was every philosopher a skeptic, on the contrary, just its chief representatives fought doubt and defended truth; consequently, these, at least, can secure for us the above-mentioned truths.” Admitting the justice of this objection, still we deny the conclusion. Apart from the fact, as already stated, that there is question of truths which stand in direct relation to our supernatural destiny, therefore, of supernatural truths, which, consequently, according to their very ideas, surpass the comprehensive power of the created mind, and that they must be even accessible to those who are only endowed with inferior intellectual gifts, whereas philosophical investigation is only within the reach of a

¹ Balmes, *Letters to one who doubts.*

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few; therefore, precisely those who have attained the highest point in the three periods of the history of philosophy have admitted that philosophy of itself is, in the present condition of the human race, incapable of completely solving even the natural relation of man to God.¹

¹ Plato says that real wisdom is a stranger to the multitude, aye, that the multitude can impossibly love wisdom (*Rep.* VI, 494a) and in *Phaedo* he thinks it very difficult, or rather impossible, to speak on a subject which concerns the future life, and that we must wait until we can finish our voyage on reliable ways "through divine speech." And (*Tim.* 28c): "It is difficult to find the creator and father of the universe; but to speak to all concerning it, absolutely impossible." But Aristoteles justly maintains (*Metaph.* II, 1) that the investigation of truth is extremely difficult, but this difficulty has not its source in the subject, but in us, "for as the eyes of a bat are in relation to day-light, so is also the eye of our soul, reason, in reference to that which by nature is dearest to all." The great Doctor of the Church, St. Augustin, also confirms the above expressions of the greatest pagan philosophers, when he teaches (*Contra Academ.* III, 19. *De util. cred.* c. 10), that a revelation and an authority are necessary, because but few are able to know God by reason alone. But that bright light, the prince and king of theologians, St. Thomas, acknowledges the insufficiency of philosophy and demands even for natural truths in the actual condition of things a revelation, since, as he says, but few could attain knowledge thereof, some on account of their incapability, others on account of their distracting occupations; and, furthermore, because very much time is required therefore and knowledge attained on this troublesome way would nevertheless be extremely incomplete. (*Contra Gent.* I, 4; I q. I. a. 1). But Leibnitz says: "He who believes nothing of things divine but what he can measure with reason, degrades the very idea of God." (*Theod. Disc. de la conformité de la foi avec la raison*, p. 46.) Kant positively denies to theoretical reasoning the capability of knowing objectively the reality of God. (*Crit. of Pure Reason*, II, p. 11; Div. II. B. III, c. 7.)

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If we consult history and look back over a period of six thousand years, and at the people and nations who have traversed the earth, we will find, we must confess, that, compared to this vast period of time and the exertions which the human mind has made, very little has been achieved and furnished in the purely natural domain of reason. Everywhere and in all directions we behold error in the most divers forms and doubt and falsehood arising. Humanity was great, but only in its errors, if we may call this greatness. Human philosophy, with all its glorious representatives in the purely natural field, has left man completely in the dark concerning his destiny; it failed either to give God the glory due Him, or to crush slavery which oppressed three-fourths of the human race. Does not every history, be it written in whatever spirit it may, prove that even the most cultured people of antiquity, who had as teachers the greatest and the most learned men in the natural domain, were not able to free themselves of the illusion of idolatry, and to attain the knowledge of the true God, and who, in spite of all their material progress, fell deeper and deeper into religious and moral degradation? Could this possibly be otherwise, since even their greatest philosophers were constantly engaged in warfare with each other, and in turn destroyed whatever others had built up? In the very first century of the Christian

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era one of the Holy Fathers put this question to the pagan Diogenes: "Who, among men, knew, in a general way, who God was before He appeared among men? Or, are you satisfied with the untenable and the silly explanations of your philosophers — called the infallible?"¹ And, moreover, has modern philosophy, after having apostatized from faith and revealed truths, inherited anything of the olden times but its doubts, the same uncertainty in regard to religion and questions of morality, which very fact forced the father of modern pantheism to say: "This is the marotte of self-thought, that the one philosopher always surpasses the other in producing something absurd."² A mixture of

¹ *Epistola ad Diognet.* c. 8.

² Hegel in Hettinger's *Apol. of Christ*, II. Before Hegel even Cicero said: "There is nothing so absurd that some philosopher would not at some time advance." (*De Divin.* II, 58.) But could any one safely place himself under such conditioned circumstances, with the utmost confidence, under the direction and guidance of a philosopher? On the road to our last end we need an *infallible guide*; only such a one can give us perfect certainty and solve our every doubt. But if we were to consider philosophy also as infallible, we would very soon become undeceived of this error. We have a striking example taken from recent history of philosophy: It was thought that in Hegel's philosophy there was really found the perfection of knowledge; that the end of the world must surely be at hand since absolute truth had been found. But this was nothing more than a beautiful dream, which soon vanished. The school of Hegel is abandoned; his system has ceased to flourish and has left in many minds no other traces than fear and terror of philosophical studies! And with what confidence could philosophers inspire the majority of

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truth and error, of wisdom and absurdity, of wit and of nonsense, — this is always and everywhere the history of the human mind left to itself.

But, let us ask in all sincerity after this reflection, which we necessarily must cut short: Can it possibly be otherwise in the actual condition of the human race? In the second discourse we have seen that the mind of man, through sin, separated itself from God. But this means separation from the very source of truth and therefore truth itself; for if God is the creator of all things, which He most undoubtedly is, then all things are true only inasmuch as they correspond with the idea of God, because He alone can be, as creator, according to the beautiful language of Plato,¹ the measure of all things; therefore, separation from God is separation from the fountain of truth. I do not wish to maintain that the human mind is entirely incapable of investigating truth and of knowing it; on the contrary, we may say with Lactantius,² that a philosophical school has never been so far from the truth that it did not perceive some of its rays; we can even admit that we bow before the great and beautiful thoughts con-

men, since they themselves do not refuse to acknowledge that not every one can conceive their truths — only genii are competent to do this. Shortly before his death this very Hegel said that of all his disciples there was only one who understood him and this one — misunderstood him.

¹ *Legg*, IV, 716 c.

² *Div. inst.*, VII, 7.

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ceived and before the remarkable results achieved by the human mind. But ever since the fall of the first man in Paradise the difficulties and the impediments in the way of the knowledge of truth, and which, in the diversity of objects, especially those which lie within the inner formation of the human faculties, are so great that man of himself cannot attain full possession and knowledge of the natural truths so necessary for his salvation.¹ It is most assuredly a contradiction to be separated from the fountain of truth, and to imagine oneself capable to know the full truth. But, in regard to our destiny, it is not sufficient to be in possession of mere parts of truths, which, because not the whole truth, contain neither the full idea of even our natural destiny nor all the means necessary thereto, for this we need the possession of the whole truth, as we have seen above. But if this be true in the mere natural order, how much more so in the supernatural, the truths of which lie completely outside of the range of our mental vision? Of whom therefore may we ask the full truth? Not of the philosophers and the sages of the world, for if their achievements are even insufficient in the natural religious sphere, if even

¹ Even Cicero remarked on this point: "Only small sparks of knowledge has nature given us, which soon become extinguished through bad morals and errors, so that the light of nature nowhere appears in its clarity and brilliancy." (*Tusc.* III, 1.)

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therein they are unsafe guides then they can do absolutely nothing of themselves in the supernatural order. They cannot, therefore, be the teachers of salvation, since supernatural truths are by no means the result of the deductions of human reason.

But shall we deny the necessity of a teacher and a leader, after having seen that no philosopher can lead us to our destiny, in the most important affair of our lives, in the attainment of our eternal destiny, since even in the ordinary affairs of life there is no mind that will not swear by some man, by some book or some master, or by some renowned idea, and that does not call itself the disciple of some master? We need not be in search of an answer very long since the great *Teacher* has appeared on earth who calls Himself *the Truth*, and who, before Pilate, gave as a reason of His mission and birth: "That I should give testimony to the truth." (John XIV, 6; XVIII, 37.) God, Himself, the Supreme Truth, hath revealed Himself in the flesh; that light hath appeared, "which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" — Jesus Christ (John I, 9), and became Himself "full of grace and truth." (John I, 14.) He could deposit the fulness of truth in the institution which He founded for the purpose of continuing the work of the Redemption — the Catholic Church.

Thus it must be if Jesus Christ is to be the

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restorer of the human race. Through sin man separated himself from God, the source of truth and very Truth itself. The abyss thus created between God and man would neither have been completely covered through the redeeming death of Christ, nor would Christ be, in the true sense, the restorer of mankind, if He had not brought the fulness of truth back into the world and made it accessible to all men. Here there is no room for quibbling; the one necessarily follows from the other. Through His death on the cross, Christ Jesus obtained for us again the right to the attainment of our supernatural destiny, consequently also to the most perfect knowledge of all those means and truths which constitute the necessary prerequisites thereof. But since, according to the intention of her Divine Founder, we can only gain supernatural union with God through connection with His Church, therefore she, too, must make the knowledge of the means possible to the very end of time, she therefore must be in full possession of the truth. St. Paul is, therefore, right when he calls the Church the “pillar and the ground of truth.” (I. Tim. III, 15.) And Tertullian draws from this truth the one conclusion, saying: “Every possible Christian workman finds out God, and makes Him known, and hence assigns to Him all those attributes which constitute a divine being, whereas Plato maintains that it is far from easy to

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discover the Maker of the universe: and when He is found, it is difficult to make Him known to all."¹

This consideration is for us a source of most important truths. In the first place, the Church, because in the full possession of all truths from the very beginning was likewise from her very foundation interiorly completed, and so she must remain forever. In fact, the assumption of any inner perfectibility of the Church is incompatible with faith in her supernatural aim and origin. This assumption would presuppose that the Church is a human institution, and hence exposed to change; it would give, if we pursued the matter to its source, both to the Church as well as to her former members a purpose different from that which she is to accomplish in the later members, and it would dishonor the divine doctrine, as if it could be perfected in the course of time through the efforts of the human mind, which, as we have seen, enters more readily into error than it succeeds in finding the truth. And how could the truths and the doctrines, deposited by her divine Founder, constitute for her children an infallible rule if she herself were not removed from vacillations and variations, if she were not unchangeable? The Church would cease to be for all times and for all places the *one* Church. She would no longer possess that unchangeable source

¹ *Apol.* c. 46.

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of life — Christ Jesus — who promised the apostles that He would send them the Holy Ghost, “to teach them all things, and who would bring to their minds whatsoever He had said to them.” (John XVI, 13.) Moreover, the above proposition follows from the former exposition of the supernatural order of the world. From the very moment in which we were reinstated into the right of our supernatural inheritance, it was as necessary for us to be able to obtain the full possession of truths and means necessary for its attainment, as the moral order of the world carries with it, from the very beginning, the natural moral law. We would be obliged, therefore, either to deny the supernatural or Christian order of the world, together with the very existence of the Church, which for reasons stated above cannot possibly be done,¹ or, we would be forced to admit that the true Church, from her very foundation, was the possessor of all truth, or, to use the language of the Apostle, that she is “the pillar and the ground of the truth,” and that, consequently, from her very foundation she was interiorly completed and perfected. But, since the supernatural order of the world finds its termination only in heaven, therefore, the Church must necessarily be in full possession of all truths to the very consummation of the world.

From this there follows another truth, which con-

¹ P. 41, 53 sqq., 63 sqq.

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firms the entire third discourse, namely, that all non-Catholic churches fail to possess the fulness of truth, aye, they readily concede that they do not possess this privilege; therefore, none of them can possibly be the true Church of Christ. "The right to prove first what we are to believe is a fundamental principle of Protestantism. This was not intended by the original reformers; they believed that they could establish their own opinions as the limits of the human mind; but they were wrong, they denied infallibility in the Catholic Church."¹ But, what does this mean: first prove and examine what you are to believe? Nothing else than this: first doubt! But, since religious doubt mostly leads to negation, therefore, positive faith would yield its position to naked negation. In the place of the "I believe," you would have to put: "I doubt, I deny." But, what is the consequence of all this? A still farther negation, namely of the supernatural order. Is this not a correct inference? In the supernatural order man must simply submit, not speculate or quibble, simply because the truths it contains surpass the intellectual horizon of man, and, therefore, have not the natural light of reason as their touchstone, but simply the authority of God who revealed them. They impel me to yield submission and faith. For, in the first place, I am bound to render submission

¹ Thus the famous Protestant, Mad. de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, IV, 2.

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to Him who is above me; and secondly, the truths which are necessary for me to attain my supernatural end, are not in the least dependent upon my arbitrariness, even as God has not made the destiny of man subject to human caprice, but solely dependent, upon His own plenteous bounty. As soon as man, therefore, opposes these truths with doubt or with investigations arising from a spirit of doubt, then he naturally will end in their negation, since he only admits his reason as the measure of their inner truths, but the measure must be proportioned to the thing measured, but reason belongs to the natural order, and the truths to be measured belong, on the contrary, to the supernatural order.¹ Thus we see that Protestantism naturally leads to rationalism, or, to speak more correctly, it is rooted in rationalism and its history, therefore, is but the history of the mind left to itself (as described above), after having separated itself from revelation, rich in sects, which,

¹ Leo XIII rightly says: "Many prefer to investigate truth only by means of rational knowledge, disregarding entirely divine faith, but he who abandons this, which in reality is the pillar of truth from which the pure light streams forth, will frequently go astray and never attain truth." And after recounting the many errors into which such persons fall, he concludes: "Thus it happens that they laud the reign of reason most gloriously and extol the power of the human mind beyond all measure, but in punishment of their pride they remain ignorant of the most important questions." Encycl. *Christian Life*. See Hettinger, *Apol. of Christ*, vol. IV, 17 Disc.: "Without Church no faith, only doubt and opinion."

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having scarcely come to light, fell quickly into oblivion, full of fluctuating ideas, which, scarcely developed, destroy each other. Aye, we may confidently assert that it, and every other society separated from the Catholic Church, shares a still more deplorable lot than many of the philosophical schools did. Negation can never be a foundation whereon a positive system can build itself, if the building is to be consequentially constructed and be endowed with permanency. The first requisite and foundation of all must be affirmation, just as this is prior to negation. But every Church separated from the Catholic Church by virtue of this very separation has negation as its starting point, and, therefore, all of them share in the consequences of this step. With negation constant change is introduced, which fact we have already touched upon above;¹ with change follows the abandonment of the full possession of truth, and the claim to permanency is relinquished, and consequently of being the true Church.² The

¹ See p. 85.

² We must not wonder that many sects and religious societies, for instance Mohammedanism and Protestantism, have lasted so long a time, though error in its very nature carries within itself the germ of death, — because it is the negation of that which gives and has existence — truth. Should there still exist within them a conservative element, then it is merely a fragment of truth, which they retained or carried out with them after their separation from the Church. And furthermore they no longer appear in reality, as we have remarked above, the same as they were in their origin; aye, every one of their founders can say in truth that

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Catholic Church only made use of negation when she was compelled to antagonize those who questioned her possession of the full truth, or who wished to deface truth by the admission of falsehood. Under such conditions only is negation admissible. Every one of the articles of her faith is introduced by the words: "I believe." Her whole foundation is based upon positive faith, and only then does she utter the words: "I deny" — when faith ceases for others to be a foundation. In a word: The Catholic Church is positive religion; Protestantism and every denomination separated from the Catholic Church is negative religion.

The Catholic Church thus presents to us a spectacle that has nothing of the terrestrial, nor of the human in it. She appears to us entirely super-terrestrial, not merely unchangeable in her exterior permanency, but unchangeable likewise in her doctrine. Two thousand years have passed over the Catholic Church, and she has suffered no change in her doctrines of faith and her laws of morality. After two thousand years she presents to the world those very fundamental mysteries the contemplation of

the end of his life contradicts its beginning. And, finally, the most of them simply prolong their existence by means of the support of the State or some temporal power, as in reality only since the beginning of Protestantism did the infamous principle come into existence: *Cujus est regio, illius est religio.* "Every one should belong to the religion of his ruler."

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which urged the great Apostle to exclaim: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!" (Rom. XI, 33) and which he preached to the admiring Areopagus of Athens, and which are acknowledged and believed to-day as firmly as they were in the days of the blooming growth of the Church. *Digitus Dei est hic!* The finger of God is here! Time is the great judge of all opinions! Whatever is limited by time and space, is precisely therefore, because so limited, subject to change; but the Catholic Church excludes from her doctrine every possibility of change; she is raised above time and space; she is super-terrestrial, supernatural, and consequently in full possession of truth.

As a rule, no charge of change is brought against the Catholic Church; on the contrary, just herein some see one of her faults, the fault of not changing, of excluding from her faith all progress. This accusation would have the appearance of justification, if the Catholic Church could preserve the treasure deposited within her by the divine Founder, with a cold resignation and toleration. It would possibly be in order if she, the teacher of all nations, could propagate her truths in a manner as the classics have been spread by being copied and printed from the yellow parchments of libraries, and sent broadcast throughout the world by means of the book-

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trade. But such is not the case. To the commission to preserve all truth deposited with her the admonition was attached: “to avoid the profane novelties of words, and opposition of knowledge falsely so-called, which some promising, have erred against the faith.” (I. Tim. VI, 20, 21 — compare Rev. III, 11.) She cannot permit the possession of truth to be wrested from her in the midst of the battle against error, and if she is forced she must explain them more clearly; she must emerge victoriously, and, in fact, always the same in doctrine and in truth, from all the assaults of the powers of darkness. And thus it has always been. Science and force, cruelty and transportation, interior scandals and exterior heresies, secret sects and public schisms, — all these have attacked the Catholic Church a thousand times over, often all at the same time, and have striven to rob her of her treasure — but she always came forth victorious, always the same out of all conflicts, and she stands erect amidst so many sects, “which are tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive.” (Ephes. IV, 14.) Is this not the most cogent proof that she is in full possession of all truth without any admission of error? Is this not a sign that she came forth from the bosom of the Immutable One Himself, and that Jesus Christ is her invisible Monarch, who stretches

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His protecting and guiding hand over her, in order that the truth deposited by Him within her may never be exposed to human arbitrariness nor to the possibility of misrepresentation? Undoubtedly.

If in the last discourse we drew the conclusion from the fact that the Church had already existed nineteen hundred years, and that she is spread all over the world, and this among nations of the most varied degree of culture and of peculiarities of all kinds, that, though constantly in conflict, yet she outlives all the powers that have ever assailed her, if, I say, we inferred from this her supernatural origin and her supernatural guidance, then, after this consideration, we are the more justified in this conclusion, since, against the preservation of the Church, intellectual weapons in the service of proud reason and of a corrupt heart are far more dangerous than the assaults of all temporal States and even of the wildest savages.¹ But even mental weapons can accomplish nothing against the Catholic Church, and they cannot dispute her divine property — her immutability. As long as the word of the Lord remains true, and “the truth of the Lord remaineth forever” (Ps. CXVI, 2) — which He spoke to His Vice-gerent on earth: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. XVI, 18) —

¹ Hettinger IV.

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so long will also the word of the Apostle remain true that “The Church of the living God is the pillar and the ground of truth.” (I. Tim. III, 15.)



II. The Organ of Truth

The establishment of the Church would have failed in its very purpose if there did not exist, within herself, an organ by means of which all men could obtain an unfailing possession of the supernatural truths which are necessary for the attainment of man’s destiny. Christ Jesus placed truth within the Church precisely in order that every man might have it within his power, even amidst the most alluring temptations and of all the assaults of error against truth, to secure for himself his supernatural destiny and all means leading thereto. But in order that this might be accomplished a living organ is necessary to announce the truth. Let us examine this more closely and carefully, for here there is question concerning a truth which, though very much attacked in our days, is nevertheless most intimately connected with the essence and the very constitution of the Church.

We must accept the constitution of the Church just as the divine Founder has framed it. To regulate it according to the institutions of temporal States and according to their constitutions would

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mean to drag the Catholic Church down to the level of a purely human society and to divest her of her supernatural character. Though it may be true of temporal States and governments that in itself and in the beginning there can be no perfect form of a constitution, but that that constitution is always the best which corresponds best to the condition of the times, the location of the country, and the peculiarity of the people to whom it is given, but this cannot be predicated of the constitution of the Church, since the Church is directly of divine origin and she does and must, in virtue of her supernatural purpose and of her invisible divine Monarch, suit all times and all places and all circumstances and all classes of people.

Christ Jesus desired to be, and forever must be, the King of His kingdom. He declared for all times: "A King I am." (John XVIII, 37.) Never can He suspend the promise made to His Church through His disciples: "I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. XXVIII, 20.) Were He to cease to be the King of His kingdom then He would no longer be its foundation and corner-stone, (I. Cor. III, 11; Ephes. II, 20; I. Pet. II, 6) and the whole building, to which He promised indestructibility and everlasting permanency would collapse, because robbed of its foundation and corner-stone. But Christ the Lord

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no longer dwells upon earth; He has returned to the Father and will only come back to judge the living and the dead at the end of time. And yet the Church is in need of a visible head, because she is a visible society, consisting of men and the head must be like unto them and assume the direction of the Church. As long as Christ Jesus dwelled visibly upon earth He could indeed be the visible center around whom all gathered and united,—but He is no longer visible among us. If any one were to object that Christ Jesus, as the invisible head, would be in Himself sufficient, we would readily grant that He Himself could directly govern the Church. But since the Church is essentially a visible and well-ordered institution, assuming this, we maintain, apart from the will and the disposition of Jesus Christ, that a visible head, representing Him, is necessary. For even as He,—though acting invisibly in the sacraments, since it is He who baptizes, who forgives sin, and who is the real priest who offered Himself as a victim on the cross and in virtue of this bread and wine are daily changed into His sacred flesh and blood upon our altars, nevertheless, on account of His going to the Father,—selected His servants through whom He wished to secure the administration and dispensation of the sacraments to the faithful, even so, though the invisible King of His kingdom, He willed

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nevertheless to appoint a visible head for His Church, who in His place should be entrusted with the direction of the whole Church,¹ and this visible head of the Church is St. Peter and his successor in the Roman See, which Peter founded and consecrated with his blood. The intention and the expressed words of Jesus Christ remove all doubt on this point and serve as the most secure foundation for the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope.

Now what is Christ Jesus in regard to His Church? Above all, her foundation, as He is her founder: "For other foundation no man can lay but that which is laid: which is Christ Jesus." (I. Cor. III, 11.) After the exposition of this truth, contained in the third and in this discourse, I scarcely think this proposition needs any further proof. But this is not all. Does Christ not appear in some other relation to His Church? Most assuredly, since for the salvation of mankind He assumed a threefold office: the office of Priest, of Prophet, and of King. The first was necessary in order to liberate mankind from the dominion of sin and to reconcile it to God. Through the second office He became the great teacher of mankind, the one Master as He calls Himself (Matt. XXIII, 10), who was to restore to mankind the truths which, through sin, had been lost in a great measure. As King of His

¹ St. Thomas *Contra Gent.* IV, 76.

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kingdom He was to rule His elect with omnipotent power and omniscient wisdom and to lead them safely to their supernatural destiny. Beyond this threefold office Christ assumed no other for the salvation of mankind and the well-being of His Church.

But what is St. Peter and each of his successors to the Church? What is their relation to her? The successors of St. Peter occupy evidently in the Roman See the same relation to the Church that Peter did himself. That which Christ ordained for the perpetual salvation of men and the abiding welfare of His Church must necessarily, in virtue of His appointment, continue in the Church which, founded upon a rock, is to last to the very end of time — to the consummation of the world. What position does St. Peter, therefore, occupy in the Church? Above all — he is her foundation. Christ Jesus Himself designates him as such in the words: “Thou art the rock and upon this rock I will build *my Church.*” (Matt. XVI, 18.) But, besides this he occupies within her a threefold office: the office of Priest, of Prophet, and of King. But into this threefold office Peter could only be inducted by Him who declared before the pagan judge that the Church is His kingdom and Who designated Himself as its King. As a matter of fact He conferred upon St. Peter the threefold office: that of

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high priest, by conferring the power of the keys: “To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. XVI, 19)¹ — the prophetic office of teaching, by the words: “Confirm thy brethren” (Luke XXII, 32), therefore also the Apostles; and the royal office by appointing Peter the Shepherd of His lambs and His sheep: “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep” (John XXI, 15, 17). The Church taught as well as the Church teaching is hereby entrusted to the charge of St. Peter.

It must appear strange to those who have followed this explanation, with any attention, that the rela-

¹ When Christ established St. Peter as the corner-stone of His Church and expressed the promise that the gates of hell shall never prevail against her, He also combined herewith a reference to the corner-stone of the temple of Jerusalem, which shut out the roaring waters of the deep. This we may admit with safety. When the Lord continued: “And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven” — then He unmistakably expressed, what was sufficiently intelligible to every Jew, a reference to the high-priesthood of which the symbol in the Old Law of the keys constantly appears. (Phillips, *Canon Law I*, 97.) The above interpretation is not even denied by Protestants and many of the Holy Fathers are among its most strenuous defenders. Even Protestant theologians attribute to the words of the Lord a Catholic meaning. G. Krueger (*What is the meaning of the history of dogma?* 1895, p. 57) says: “Our present text, beyond all tricks of interpretation, treats of an infallible Church and back of this there exists the infallible Pope.” (In Mausbach, *Kernfragen*, s. 101.)

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tion of Christ and that of St. Peter to the Church is the same: both are her foundation, her high priest, her supreme teacher, and her king. But is there no difference between them? Yes, most certainly. Christ Jesus possesses the above-mentioned properties as God-man, in His relations to the Church, in an essential manner; the power of Peter is the same as that of Christ — but it is a **DELEGATED** one, dependent upon Him who conferred it; Peter is placed under the permanent influence of Christ. This truth follows from the general law of the dependency of man and of every creature upon God. Everything that the creature possesses, it possesses not of itself, but in virtue of the voluntary goodness of God and in consequence of His permanent co-operation. Besides, this truth is confirmed by that beautiful figure of St. Paul: The Church of Christ, he says (Col. I, 18; I. Cor. XII, 12, 20; Ephes. V, 30) is the organic body of Christ on account of her fulness of God, because in her dwells the fulness of Him who fills all things. (Ephes. I, 23.) He is within her not only in virtue of His divinity, but He is also present in her and active according to His humanity, He is her head, from which power flows incessantly into the members of her body. Aye, it is precisely this influx of grace, emanating from the head of the Church, according to the Council of Trent, which is the directing and

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the moving cause of the life of the entire saving life of the Church.¹ This influx of grace, from the head of the Church into the members thereof, differs as much, according to the various positions of the members in the organic mystic body of the Church, as God directs in the common order of the world not all in the same manner and does not offer all the same help, but different according to their differences. But whatever position a member may occupy in this body, it always remains under the moving influence of the head, for Christ must necessarily reign over all. Just as the fact that Christ is the foundation of the Church, besides which no other can be laid, does not exclude Peter from being the *rock* of the Church, so is Peter, albeit that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, nevertheless also the head of this Church, though not in virtue of his own fitness, but by means of the power of Christ, which, in view of his position, is communicated to him, and continues to operate in Him.

Two truths are therefore thoroughly established: The first is that Christ Jesus is the invisible head, the invisible king of His Church, He is her inmost source of life. Only through His influence can we explain the immutability of the Church in her

¹ Sess. VI. c. 16 (Denziger *Enchir.* n. 692). Compare Schaezler, *Menschwerdung*, s. 356 sqq.

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external duration and in her doctrine and in her perpetual growth. These operations absolutely exceed the power of man, not perchance because he is isolated, but on account of his very nature and that of every creature, on account of his finiteness. But if the above-mentioned operations exceed the power of creatures in itself, then even all men together are incapable of producing them, for by the addition of mere ciphers you can never attain a positive sum and from the finite you can never make the infinite.

The second truth that is thoroughly established is that St. Peter, and each one of his successors, is the vicarious head of the Church. Peter has entered into the full inheritance of Christ as to the foundation, the high priest, the supreme teacher and king of the Church. But he alone has entered into the fulness of the power of Christ, for not to all the Apostles did Christ say: You are rocks and upon these rocks I shall build my Church — one only — Peter — is endowed with the privilege of being the foundation of the Church. Not upon all of the Apostles has He conferred supreme teaching authority, — to the one alone, Peter, He said: “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not — confirm thy brethren.” Not all of His Apostles did He appoint supreme rulers of His Church — for the consequence of this would have been a

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division of the kingdom, which, precisely through its unity is to bear the stamp of divinity — no, to the one alone, to Peter He said: “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep.”¹

But, if this be true, if Christ did not divide His supreme power, but conferred it in its fulness upon St. Peter and through him upon each one of his successors, then what follows from this? Merely this, that St. Peter and his successors entered into the office of Christ to secure for the world the unfailing possession of the supernatural truths. This is the office of Christ inasmuch as He is the supreme teacher of the Church, and this office He transferred, without any reservation whatever, as we have seen, upon St. Peter. That the very purpose of the Church would have been forfeited if there did not exist within her an organ through which men could attain an unerring possession of the supernatural truths necessary for the attainment of their destiny, this we have already seen above. But who else could possibly be this organ than he who has entered fully into the inheritance of Christ Jesus, of Truth itself, who testified before Pilate that He came into the world in order to give testimony of the truth? Who else but the possessor of the supreme teaching authority could be the infallible exponent of this doctrine? Or, should it be neces-

¹ Confer Vat. Coun. *dogma de eccl.* c. 1. (Denziger *Enchir.* n. 1667).

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sary that a majority or the aggregation of the episcopate be the infallible interpreter of the revelation deposited with the Church? This might have a twofold meaning: it might mean that either the majority or the entirety of the bishops be absolutely necessary, because without their activity the full truth could not be obtained. But this would imply a degradation of the dignity of the Church down to the very level of a worldly parliament and the making of the Holy Ghost dependent upon the personal ability and number of men or to exclude Him entirely. The standpoint from which this view is defended is a purely natural one. Or, it might mean that Jesus Christ transferred the supreme teaching authority upon the greater part or the entire body of the episcopate; that He, consequently, divided His supreme power between the Pope and the bishops and made the head of the Church dependent in his enactments upon the consent of the bishops. But apart from the fact that this interpretation contradicts the above-mentioned declarations of Christ, since Christ Jesus subjected to St. Peter, and in him, to each one of his successors, not only the Church which is taught (*ecclesia discens*), but also the teaching Church (*ecclesia docens*), and therefore such an explanation would also contain within itself a most manifest contradiction.

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“Peter was to receive the *firmness* of faith, to which his brethren were to attribute their strength and by the aid of which they are to escape the danger of being sifted like wheat, and now Peter, if he wishes that the faith announced by him be accepted, should submit the doctrine, which he is to proclaim from the height of his chair, to the control of his brethren! Peter must feed the entire flock, sheep and lambs, and now the lambs are only to confide themselves to his care in as far as the sheep declare that this may be done without any danger! Christ Jesus gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which, in biblical language, is equivalent to the highest power over the Church, and now the laws, which the authority of Peter may enact, should only have such force as his subjects may accept! But in such a case would it be still proper to speak of subjects?”¹ Such an interpretation would be absolutely inadmissible. Peter alone and his actual successor, or the bishops united with Peter, are the infallible interpreters of divine revelation. “But how can the Pope”—it is generally objected—“a mortal man, be free from error when there is question of an interpretation of truths necessary for supernatural happiness, since we ourselves have conceded that the human mind is, in its present condition, scarcely able of itself to dis-

¹ Gueranger, *The highest teaching power of the Pope*.

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cover even a mere natural relation to God? But if the infallible interpretation of said truths depends upon the majority of bishops, are not they also all mortal men? And if it be absolutely contradictory to the nature of a man to be infallible and free of error, then does not the majority and even the entire body of men come under the same law, since both are merely an aggregation of individuals? Most undoubtedly. We are therefore forced to conclude that the objection against the infallibility of the Pope can only be raised from a natural and never from a supernatural standpoint. It presupposes that the capability of many can produce an effect which the individual man cannot produce — freedom of error. If the question were concerning natural truth then this supposition might possibly have some basis; but applied to the supernatural domain, it manifestly contains a contradiction. It surpasses all human power *in itself* to be an infallible interpreter of supernatural truths, and how then could this effect be possibly attained by an accumulation of human power? From a supernatural standpoint we are rather forced to say that as the unchangeable exterior duration of the Church is at no time dependent upon terrestrial power and mortal man, so likewise can neither the immutability of the doctrine and its infallible interpretation be the privilege of one or more men,

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but solely of Him who is Immutability and Truth itself.

Whether it be that Peter alone and his actual successor, or whether the majority or the entire body of the bishops be infallible in the interpretation of the truths deposited by Christ with His Church, — it is at all times CHRIST JESUS Himself who is the real source of this infallibility; His assistance alone secures for the bearer infallibility against error. But whoever this bearer may be and whoever it be that receives this aid, whether it be Peter and his successor for the time being, or whether the majority or the entire body of the episcopate, that depends solely and merely upon the original disposition and determination of the divine Founder and the invisible head of the Church. Christ could surely have selected the latter, but as a matter of fact He chose the former which is evidently proven both by His own clear declarations, mentioned above, and by tradition, according to which Peter alone and his successors, the Roman Pontiffs, possess the power requisite to govern the Church. “Therefore have the bishops of the entire world, at times individually and at times collectively in council assembled, in conformity with the ancient custom of the Church and an ancient rule, reported first to the Apostolic chair (founded by St. Peter) the dangers that arose concerning matters of faith, so that

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there the damage to faith be healed where faith could suffer no loss.”¹

This truth is confirmed, moreover, by the above mentioned figure of the Church as the body of Christ. The influx of power from the head which is Christ, into the members of the body, as we have already mentioned, is the leading and moving source of all life of the entire saving life of the Church. Every member of this body is, however, moved to activity according to his position in the Church by the head — Christ. But the position of St. Peter and his successors in the Church is like that of Christ Himself, with this difference, that to Christ it is due of Himself, but to the former vicariously and through its dependence upon Christ. But should this, the most prominent member of the body of Christ, who fills His place on earth, be devoid of the influx of the grace of Christ? On the contrary; he must receive it in a much richer measure, since the head is more prominent than any other member. But if the Vicar of Christ, as the visible head of the mysterious body of Christ, were not preserved against every error in all his actions and enactments concerning the general good of this body, that is, of the Church, through an antecedent influx of grace on the part of Christ, then the error of the Vicar of Christ would be attributable in a

¹ Con. Vat. I. c. c. 4. (Denziger *Enchir.*, n. 1679.)

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double manner to Christ Himself: Once because the most prominent member of His mysterious body, the visible head, did not receive that influx of grace which is due him, owing to his position as supreme teacher of the Church, and again, because the error of the visible head would become the error of the whole body, therefore of Christ Himself, since the Apostle—owing to the intimate union of Christ with His Church—does not hesitate to call the latter herself—Christ. (I. Cor. XII, 12.) But to say or to assert this would be rank blasphemy.

Does not, through this consideration, the one mark of the Catholic Church repeatedly confront us: the union of the divine and the human, of the supernatural and the natural? A man who is mortal—of himself and as man as much subject to error as is any other child of Adam—is placed over the Church which is destined to survive all men and all powers of all men, and the official actions of this mortal man are removed from the vagaries and dangers of error to which everything purely human is exposed! Where will you find a cause for this? Answer and tell me, my dear readers, why is the Church the stronger the longer she exists, the more beautiful the more she advances in years, the more youthful the older she grows? Do not these very combinations of conceptions in the domain of the terrestrial contain an

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absolute contradiction? Most certainly. But the foundation of the above-mentioned properties of the Church does not exist in worldly things; for otherwise the Church would share as a worldly or human work also the fate of such; but as the kingdom of Christ she is not of this world; she descended from God on high and therefore her immutability and never-fading beauty. But the Church is not only herein but in every other relation that concerns her supernatural end and the supernatural destiny of the faithful not of this world, but of God, therefore, aye, rather in her doctrine and the interpretation thereof. She appears as such always and everywhere with the attributes of the divine and the human, therefore also in the infallibility of the Pope, and if we ascribe to the Church or to her members effects which completely surpass all human power, then this is always done in virtue of that union of the divine and the human element in the Church, and as the whole Church can only be properly understood from a supernatural standpoint, so too is this standpoint in the correct judgment of papal infallibility the only one admissible and necessary. Otherwise we would simply reduce either the truths, of whose infallible interpretation there is question, to purely natural ones, and thereby annul our supernatural destiny and degrade the Church, upon which her mere historical appearance

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has placed the seal of her divine foundation and mission, to a mere human institution, or we, and not the Church, would make man, even though it be only in the majority—a God. That which the Church ascribes to the assistance of the Holy Ghost, to the antecedent influx of the grace of Christ—the infallible interpretation of the deposit of revelation confided to her keeping, through a human instrument, the Pope—would be from the standpoint of the objectors the result of mere human power, though it be admittedly a united one! Thus the Catholic Church alone possesses in her doctrine of Papal infallibility that fundamental law which we considered in the first discourse: The dependency of man upon God. She alone sustains the fundamental principle of the actual order of the world, which is: *Christ must reign over all.*

III. Conclusions

If we unite the above doctrine of the Church, according to which she was interiorly completed and in full possession of truth, with the one just explained concerning Papal infallibility, then the result will demonstrate the truth of the words of the Vatican Council that “the successors of St. Peter were not promised the Holy Ghost in order that through His inspiration they might proclaim

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new doctrines, but that through His assistance the revelation or the deposit of faith which has been delivered through the Apostles, might be preserved sacred and be faithfully interpreted.”¹ The essence of faith can never be changed even though there be progress in the knowledge of the divinely revealed subjects of faith, which in themselves are unchangeable.²

If, however, we consider Papal infallibility in reference to the supernatural destiny of man and to the object of the Church, which is to enable man to attain his end, then it necessarily follows that infallibility must extend to all which is in any way connected with the eternal salvation of man; for, as we have said in the beginning, we need herein complete certainty to the exclusion of every possible error. Or, should not the power of the Pope extend as far in the direction of the Church, since she has, of course in her dependency upon God, the same boundaries which the kingdom of Christ has, whom Peter Damian calls the real Emperor of the world?

From this relation of Papal infallibility to the supernatural end of man and of that of the Church, it follows, moreover, that infallibility does not con-

¹ *Ibidem.*

² See Bishop Zwerger, *What does the oecum. counc. teach concerning Papal infallibility?* and Schaezler, *Papal Infallibility*, p. 76 sqq.

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fine itself to the mere private life of the faithful, but that it must also extend to spheres which are subject to State authority, in as far as they come under the domain of the Church. But they come under the domain of the Church inasmuch as they are connected with religion and morality. This proposition follows necessarily from the relation of the Church to the State, as we have shown in the last discourse, and from the relation of the Pope to the Church. This makes the office of the Vicar of Christ like an admiral's ship which, as St. Thomas says, the rest of the fleet, the worldly powers, must follow in order to reach the harbor of their eternal destiny. But if they lose sight of the admiral's ship they run the risk of losing the proper direction, of going astray or of suffering shipwreck.¹ The State, it is true, has not for its immediate object the supernatural destiny of its citizens, for this it lacks the means, but because it is itself a part of the supernatural order, it should never lose out of sight the supernatural destiny of its citizens. Its aim must be subordinate to that of the Church; for above it there is a higher — a last end, the beatific vision of God, to which all are called and the acquisition of which the Church alone makes possible, because she alone possesses the treasury of the graces of Christ.

¹ Opusc. 201, c. 14.

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But ever since the “modern State” has become animated by the thought of a double morality, it believes likewise, because it recognizes no superior to itself, that all its actions, its State-acts are superior to every control. The interference of the Church is therefore in its eyes entirely unjustifiable and dangerous to the end which it pursues, hence also its reproach of the “danger of Papal infallibility to the State.”

But, Brethren, look around you and behold the ruins where formerly there stood such a grand edifice! What power has undermined the ancient structure of order and harmony? Who has caused this destruction? Whence arise to-day the tempestuous billows among the nations, like unto a storm-tossed ocean? whence the frightful anxiety, that apprehensive foreboding among princes and people concerning a most gloomy future? Why is the whole of Europe compared to-day to a volcano which incessantly belches forth flames of fire and affords no moment’s rest to the inhabitants around, even when peace apparently prevails?¹ Every man of intelligence will answer: The present society has become a victim of such a dangerous state because it has lost the *anchor of authority*. But why did it lose it? Yes—why? Because the princes and the people have withdrawn themselves from the supreme

¹ See Lacordaire, *Œuvres* IV, 275.

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authority of the Church, of that of the Pope! Do you desire an explanation of this cause? It is as simple and the same as ever: *We live in the supernatural or the Christian order of the world.* In this order the mainstay of society cannot be a purely natural authority, for this would involve a plain contradiction. In this order the natural must be supported by the supernatural and ever be subordinate to it. But how can this be? The whole world and the whole human race is directed by God only in view of Christ, — and how can a purely natural authority, which is not immediately connected with Christ, form in this world a foundation of order and the solid support of society? This is impossible! We are therefore compelled to draw a conclusion far different and it is this: Since the Catholic Church is the most necessary institution in this order, since she alone, because she is in full possession of the treasury of Christ's graces, enables all men to attain their supernatural destiny and consequently is, as the religion, the only foundation of States and governments, therefore, the supreme authority of the Church, her head, cannot be something merely accidental to humanity, but is according to Christ's determination, just as necessary as is the Church herself; for *ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia* — “Where Peter is there is the Church!”¹ Peter

¹ St. Ambrose in Ps. 40, n. 30.

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and his successors occupy the same position in relation to the Church, and, therefore, to the human race, as Christ does Himself—but: *Christ must reign over all*. Only thus can this world appear to us as it really is—the place of preparation and the prerequisite of our supernatural compliment in heaven.

The authority of the Pope is therefore necessary in this world and every other authority must be maintained through it. This is simply a rational conclusion which follows from the supernatural truth that we are living in a supernatural order in this world. But will not natural authority lose its dignity thereby? By no means, but, on the contrary, every human authority receives and maintains through the infallible authority of the Pope its own solidity and true nobility. “This supreme authority of the Pope,” said the head of the Church, “does not suppress, but supports; it does not destroy, but builds up.”¹ Therefore emperors and kings formerly called the Pope “Father,” and they in turn were designated by him as “sons.” After all this we may without fear draw the conclusion, with a great bishop, that if some future day God were to curse Europe and visit upon it the most dreadful of all punishments, if He were to take from our midst the very beacon of the light of faith and of civilization, then He would begin by withdrawing from us

¹ *Acta et decreta Con. Vat.*

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the Papacy and transplant it elsewhere. But what then? Are we not therefore compelled to point to the contempt of the highest authority on earth, of this support of all intellectual and moral order, as the approximate cause of all the great evils, which to-day inflict European society? Therefore, "Oh ye kings understand: receive instruction, you that judge the earth." (Ps. II, 10.)

Brethren, *we are children of eternity!* As children of the Catholic Church we no longer belong to this world, nor to this century, the Kingdom of which we are citizens is — according to the two last discourses — by no means of this world; it is a daughter of Eternity!

The Catholic Church is a daughter of Eternity, for her object is not of this world; her founder is raised above every limit of time and space; her supreme ruler is God Himself, and her visible head occupies the place of Him who said: "I am the Truth." Her doctrine is removed from every danger of fluctuation and change, just as she herself received the positive divine assurance that "the gates of hell shall never prevail against her." Thus the Catholic Church is as Christ is Himself "Yesterday and to-day: and the same forever." (Heb. XIII, 8.) This is the foundation of our consolation; this is the source of our enthusiasm! Nations came and are gone, the Church has stood at their

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cradle and at their grave, she outlives all governments, she saw their laws and institutions appear to the light of the day, and change and fall back into utter oblivion, — and *I have the happiness to be a child of this Church!* Nineteen centuries, since the appearance of Christ, are witnesses of the most dreadful upheavals and lamentable changes; the foundations of the earth were shaken, as it were, and to-day in the very midst of society we see nothing but changes and divisions. But the Catholic Church is not changed, she is the same as ever, she grows amidst the very storm — and *I have the happiness to be a child of this Church!*

All churches and sects outside of the Catholic Church are like corpses without souls, skeletons without life, they are in a state of dissolution and disappearing in the abyss of nothingness; the Catholic Church alone stands firm amidst this medley of individual and constantly changing opinions; she grows strong in the very midst of losses, for she is a daughter of Eternity — and I have the happiness to be a *child of this Church!*

Indeed, Brethren, we are the children of Eternity! and as children of Eternity we cannot submit to the doctrine of mortal man, of a century, or of a nation. *One is our Master* in the Catholic Church — *Christ Jesus!* He directs and governs her through His Vicar; He preserves him against all error “in

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order that the whole flock of Christ be secured by him against the poisonous food of error and be nourished in the pasture of heavenly doctrine, in order that every occasion of schism be removed and the whole Church be preserved in the unity of faith and, resting upon her foundation, she may stand firm against the very gates of hell.”¹ Therefore, Oh holy Catholic Church! Mother of the faithful, true ark of salvation! “If ever I should forget thee, may I be despised and forgotten! may my tongue cleave to my jaws if I do not remember thee, if I cease to consider thee the beginning of my joy.” (Ps. CXXXVII, 5, 6.) Would that thou wert acknowledged by all as the foundation of all blessing, as the source of all happiness; would that the moment soon arrived in which all Christians of all places and parts of the world would make one common profession of faith: I believe in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church!

¹ Con Vat. *de Eccles.* c. 4. (Denziger *Enchir.*, n. 1680.)





FIFTH DISCOURSE

THE SUPERNATURAL LIFE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

“As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” — JOHN XV, 4, 5.

THE Catholic Church is not *of* this world, but she is *in* this world. She is the most perfect work of God for humanity. This is her aim, and for this she was established — to lead humanity to its supernatural destination.

But does the Church really accomplish her purpose? Does she respond to the intention of her Founder? Be her task ever so exalted and grand, if she does not enable every man, inasmuch as it lies with her, to attain his eternal destiny, then, in spite of her otherwise acknowledged beauty, she is wanting in an essential requisite — she fails to accomplish her purpose in the world.

Though, according to the considerations so far

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instituted, we could never reach this conclusion, though her divine origin, her supernatural constitution and direction be more than sufficient grounds to admit that she is likewise able to accomplish her supernatural purpose, still, it remains ever a secret to us how she accomplishes this in the individual, for we by no means know how she operates in the individual man and in society in order to elevate them to the supernatural order. It is most certain that the Church, because she is the great institution of the redemption and of the salvation of the human race, as we have seen above,¹ must be in possession of the supernatural means in order to produce the intended transformation of man and of society. For if the present world is but the preparation for the eternal beatific vision of God, in the fruition of which our last aim and end consists, then the Church must be able to produce in man and in society a condition which is in direct relation to the supernatural perfection of man in heaven. The Church must consequently be a social power. True, she already meets this demand by the activity of her teaching authority; she sends in virtue of Christ's commission her messengers to the utmost bounds of the earth, and she has the Gospel preached through them in order to receive all men into her bosom as the disciples of Christ. But teaching is not yet the ful-

¹ P. 52 sqq.

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ness of power, by any means; it alone by no means explains the divine vocation of the Church and the divine life of those called.

If so far we have considered how Christ Jesus is present in the Church and how in every relation He is the source of her life, we will now consider Him, as far as time and space will permit, in His relation to the members of the Church.

I. Grace the Means of the Renovation of Humanity

i. Five powers which are active in the great transformation of the world.

If we consider the forces and powers which are active in the transformation of the world, we come across five principal ones: The power of the sword, the power of gold, the power of law, the power of science, and the power of speech; these are the bearers of "public opinion."¹ These powers have acted within a greater or less degree upon all the civilized people and act to-day in a somewhat increased measure.

Can the Catholic Church make use of these powers in order to accomplish that transformation which is a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of the supernatural destiny? If we set aside the two first powers, which we have already excluded in

¹ See P. Felix, Confer.: *Le Christ comme repar. du monde.*

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our third discourse, then what is the prerequisite of the power of law? Perfect men, who have made the law. Only they make perfect laws and constitutions, which are at the same time a blessing to States and to governments. And, conversely, perfect laws are only observed by perfect men. A bad man will try to circumvent the most perfect law and in the midst of a degenerate society the most perfect laws would avail little or nothing, for the law does not give power to fulfil the law. Good laws, therefore, presuppose, in all cases, perfect men.

But what makes men perfect? Is it, perhaps, science? Nothing could be more ridiculous than this assumption. The progress of the nineteenth century was great indeed; to deny this would be to fly into the face of truth; no one therefore denies it, it is on the lips of all. But with all this has humanity become any better and happier? If it was said of the Greeks that in the heights of the splendor of the arts and the sciences and in the full bloom of liberty they were more unhappy than the most of them could believe, then what shall we say of our own century which does not possess all these blessings in the same degree? Indeed, Brethren, to know the truth and to live up to it are quite different things. If any one wishes a new proof of the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning original sin, here it is: "You live differently from the man-

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ner in which you speak,"¹ This is a truth which man who is left to himself must constantly recall to himself. He investigates truth and possibly after a long research he may find it, and would now like to live in accordance with it, but he lacks the strength! If in the beginning of our last discourse we have shown the impossibility of a man left to himself to acquire the knowledge of pure and perfect truth, for which his heart longs, should it now be necessary to give similar proof of the impossibility of living, in virtue of our own power and left entirely to ourselves, according to the truth, since every one sees "another law in his members, fighting against the law of his mind, and captivating him in the law of sin." (Rom. VII, 23.) Even the most resplendent truths and doctrines may show us the way, but they can never give us the power to follow it.

The ancient world, with few exceptions, was convinced that true happiness could only be attained through virtue, if in the soul of the virtuous that faculty reigned to which government is due—reason.²

The purpose of every State-institution, says Plato, is the re-acquisition of that condition of happiness of the human race which has disappeared, but the moral aim of man is the attainment of the

¹ Seneca, *De vita beata*, c. 17.

² Plato, *Rep.* I, 353e, IV, 442c; *Phædon*, 69b.

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most perfect likeness of God,¹ — the absolute good. But his greater disciple concludes therefrom that the spirit within us, in comparison to the corporal, is something divine, and therefore the life which corresponds to the spirit may also be called divine, that man should not direct his thoughts on human things and things that are mortal, though he be human and mortal himself, but as far as is attainable, he should live correspondingly and according to the highest and that which is immortal within us; for to each one that which is becoming to his nature is the highest and most suitable, and therefore for a man a life which is in keeping with his spirit, is for him the most blessed.² But have the teachings of these great men, though most beautiful, of God and of the soul, produced any change for the better?³ They often announced most beautiful doctrines, but they brought forth no beauty in morals. Indeed, the weakness of the human heart was especially experienced by the philosophers themselves, and even the best disposed among them could have said with the Apostle: “For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil

¹ Plato, X, 613a; *Theaetet.*, 176b.

² Aristot., *Ethic. Nicom.*, X, 7.

³ Even Cicero remarked: “Often I have read Plato on the soul. But somehow, as long as I read I agreed with him but scarcely had I laid down the book and begun to meditate over it myself than my conviction seemed to disappear.” *Tusc.*, I, 11.

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which I will not, that I do.” (Rom. VII, 19.) Paganism with all its great researches was weakened through immorality, vices gnawed at the inmost marrow of the nations and their best men were unable to help themselves, much less others; for “no one,” said one of them, “is able to help himself, unless it be that some one will stretch forth the hand to him and lift him up.”¹ In the present condition of man his will is much weaker than his reason, aye, in most cases, his most formidable opponent, though I do not wish to assert that man is not capable of himself of doing some good, since by sin human nature has not been completely corrupted.

But greater even than science is the power of speech. Used at the proper time speech sways thousands upon thousands; it commands conviction in the hearer even though thought be excluded. But when did the world produce greater orators than in the days of antiquity? Even to-day they are not silent. But did they create a transformation of morals?

2. The law of the Church resists the natural man.

But, let us not tarry too long over these considerations, since these powers, even supposing the greatest possible results therefrom, do not in the least serve the purpose of the Church. The

¹ Seneca, *Epistola 52.*

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Catholic Church desires, of course, to produce a transformation in man and in society, but a transformation which corresponds to the supernatural destiny of man, which has for its object elevation to the supernatural order. She wishes, above all, to control the minds through the law of faith; she presents for man's admission those mysteries and truths concerning which the human mind must humbly acknowledge that it does not understand them. She preaches the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, into whose depths even the pure spirits may not penetrate. She proclaims to the world a God-man who sacrificed His life upon the cross for us; she teaches the universal resurrection of the dead, which no mind of itself could possibly have discovered. And how does she establish these truths? The whole proof that she gives, says Bossuet, is this, that reason must yield to them because it is born subject to them. *Haec dicit Dominus*, "so saith the Lord?"—this is the proof!

The Church strives to direct the will of man through the law of the love of God and of neighbor. She separates the will from its hitherto controlling center, from its proper "Ego," and after having turned it towards God, she directs it towards the neighbor also. Man should adore in heaven that which he neither sees nor comprehends; he should love on earth that which by nature he despises.

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The Church wishes to influence the actions of man through the law of mortification and self-denial. The very name of this indicates that this is a law that does not flatter the senses nor the inclinations of man, but is opposed to his inmost essence, to his very "being."

Is not the transformation which the Church strives to produce in us diametrically opposed to our natural life? Man finds it difficult even to follow the law of reason, and now he should subject his mind to that which he does not understand and which he comprehends the less the more he racks his brain about it,—against this the pride of man rises up; his love should henceforth be transferred to an object unknown or misjudged by him, which exceeds his comprehension,—against this his self-love rebels; his actions should bear more the impress of a supernatural than of a natural terrestrial life,—against this concupiscence and the sensuality of man revolts.

The transformation which the Catholic Church strives to produce in us corresponds to the supernatural destiny to which she wishes to raise us. The old Adam must die and the whole of nature be raised above itself. But can the Church produce this effect with a purely natural power? Would this not involve a contradiction? Whatever might be said, nature cannot do this; it cannot be the cause

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of this transforming power; for nature cannot exceed nature, it cannot raise itself above itself, because it cannot operate beyond its own nature.

3. Every member of the Church must be in communion with Christ Jesus.

The inmost life and essence of Christianity, which we can no longer deny, is Jesus Christ Himself, and the history of the Church is merely Christ Jesus, as He unfolds Himself in the space and the time of the world. Christ Jesus not only lived nineteen hundred years ago in such a manner that He would have disappeared since and we only could remember Him historically as one already departed; He is not yet forgotten on earth; He lives in His Church, aye, He is more alive among nations now than are the princes and the kings who govern them.¹ Faith in Jesus Christ, the veneration for His sacred person; and love for Him are the life of nations and of millions of souls which succeed each other in this world without interruption.

But if Christ Jesus is eternally alive in His Church, must He not also live and be present in every true member of the Church? Could it otherwise be truly said that Jesus Christ is in His Church eternally living and present, since the Church is not imaginable outside of individuals? Think of that beautiful image which St. Paul applies to the Church:

¹ Compare Moehler, *Symbol.*, 7th German edit., p. 300.

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Of the Body of Christ which He fills with His Spirit. In this mysterious organic Body Christ is the head, we are His members. We form with Christ one whole, as St. Augustine says: *Christus facti sumus*, "We are become Christ."¹ But how could unity reign in this body, how could it be said that we form with Christ one whole, if every member were not united and in communion with the head — Jesus Christ.²

But, Brethren, let us seek a deeper foundation for this truth before we draw therefrom the proper conclusion. In the second discourse we have already seen³ that the redemption of mankind through Christ Jesus may, in a measure, be called a new creation. In fact, the first creation would have rather served as our eternal death, had not the second person of the Blessed Trinity offered Himself to restore fallen humanity. What would it have availed us that Adam had become for all his descendants the source and root of their natural life, but at the same time also the cause of their eternal death, had not a new Adam become the source and root, not indeed of our natural life, but of the supernatural, which in Adam we had all lost? True,

¹ In Joannem, XXI, no. 8.

² Compare M. Grabmann, *Die Lehre des Hl. Thomas von Aquin von der Kirche als Gotteswerk*, s. 194ff.; C. Commer, *Die Kirche in ihrem Leben und Wesen*, L, 8off.

³ Above p. 63.

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Adam would have transplanted supernatural life into his descendants without the fall,¹ but after his apostasy from God he could be to us only father of the natural life, and — of eternal damnation. Now, what follows from this? A great truth which is worthy of the utmost consideration and which places the above truth in the clearest light. The preservation of a thing presupposes the same power as that which produced it. Thus, it is true to say that the preservation of our supernatural life is every moment a continuous creation, because the former requires no lesser power than the latter. As we could not give ourselves life, so neither can we preserve it without the maintaining power of God; without this we would revert into a state of nonentity, from which God in His infinite goodness has brought us forth.²

If we apply this principle to the supernatural life it will verify itself in a still higher degree. For apart from the fact that we did not give ourselves existence, and are consequently also devoid of the power to sustain it, so does that existence and life transcend the whole natural order, it lies beyond its domain, consequently the necessary power for its maintenance must be also a supernatural one, in short, Christ, the restorer of the supernatural

¹ Cf. S. Thomas I. q. 100 a. 1.

² S. Thomas I. q. 104 a. 1.

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order, must continue to live and to act in every one redeemed, in order that the redeemed may not fall back again into the servitude of the devil. Have we already forgotten what it means to possess the right to attain that end, which is natural to God alone, of the clear and beatific vision of His essence? Did we not recognize herein a participation of the divine nature?¹ But, on this supposition, would it not be ridiculous to assume that of ourselves we possess a power in virtue of which we can maintain ourselves in the right and in the participation of the divine nature? Just as we were put into the possession of that right only through the mediation of Christ, so, too, we continuously live in union with Him in order that we may not lose this supernatural existence and life. Therefore does our Redeemer Himself say: "Abide in me: and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing." (John XV, 4, 5.)

4. Union with Christ consists in sanctifying grace.

From whatever view we may consider the above-mentioned truths, in all events, the necessity of union and association of the individual members with Christ confronts us. But how is this union

¹ Above p. 48.

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to be effected? Or rather, which is the bond of union with Christ, since Christ our Lord cannot possibly be united with every individual member? How are we incorporated into His mystical body? The answer is simple: precisely because Christ is the head of the Church and the individual members receive the influx of grace out of His great superabundance, therefore, grace is likewise the bond of union between ourselves and Christ, through it union with Christ is effected. This is what St. Thomas means when he says that grace was not given to Christ only as an individual person, but as to the head of the Church, that there might be an overflow from her into the members individually.¹ Since He Himself is full of grace and truth, as St. John teaches, therefore we also have received of His fulness. (John I, 14, 16.) Through grace alone, therefore, are we united with Christ; for, according to the beautiful expression of St. Augustine, as the soul does not only vivify and animate the head, but likewise the whole body, so is also the Church vivified in her head and members by the one soul, which is the same grace, in such a manner that the body of the Church, without any detriment to the distinction between head and members, has but one nature.²

¹ S. Thomas III. q. 48 a. 1. Compare Grabmann s. 217ff.; Commer, s. 41ff.

² *De agone Christi*, c. 20.

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But, what grace can this be? Can we entertain the least doubt hereof since we know that it is only that grace which elevates us above every imaginable, created nature, into the supernatural order and brings us into immediate relation with our supernatural destiny — sanctifying grace? Because to be one with Christ we must belong to the same order with Him, the reestablisher of the supernatural order of the world, and, therefore, this union can only be established by that grace which elevates us to the order reestablished by Christ.

Herein we behold the inmost connection with that which we said in the second discourse concerning the supernatural destiny of man. We are all called to an end proper to God alone, which, therefore, lies beyond the domain of created nature. To that destiny which man only attains in the future world, he must stand in a certain relation, even in this world, since, as we have remarked above,¹ the man of time does not differ essentially from the man of eternity, and the eternal vision of God is presented as a reward which must be merited in this world.

We must therefore reach a destination which surpasses the power of our understanding and our natural ability and for which our natural activity, be it ever so intensely perfect, does not suffice. What, therefore, must be done? Natural activity,

¹ Above p. 48.

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or rather nature, whence activity springs, must by the accession of a supernatural power, of a supernatural cause of life, be elevated in order that the destiny, activity and its cause be placed in proper relation. For the extent of activity is evidently regulated according to the power of the cause from which it comes. But the supernatural end stands in no relation to human nature, consequently man needs for the acquisition of his destiny a higher nature, and this is grace.¹ It elevates existence, as the cause of activity, above itself and establishes between human nature and the supernatural end a proper relation. Sanctifying grace, which flows from Christ, the head, into the individual members of the Church, in order to establish between Him and them the necessary union, is therefore a completion and elevation of our nature, it enables man to reach an activity which he cannot attain of himself.

Therefore, it is grace which effects a communion between Christ and the soul, a union of God with it, and the attainment of our eternal destiny.

But, have we already hereby mentioned the most perfect cause of the transformation which the Church strives to produce in us? Have we found for that transmutation, opposed to the purely nat-

¹ S. Thomas, I. 2, q. 109, a5; Schaezler, *Natur und Uebernatur*, s. 114.; Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, II. Buch, No. 165, s. 303ff., and *Herrlichkeiten der Gnade*, III. Buch, 10 c.

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ural and, through sin, corrupted life, the corresponding power in sanctifying grace?

It is true, sanctifying grace is the real source of the life of supernatural activity. But this is so only indirectly, because infused into the essence of the soul and not merely into the power whence activity immediately flows. But in order that the soul may be enabled to produce actions which are proper to supernatural life, to which it is elevated by sanctifying grace, its powers and capabilities must be transfigured and made partakers of the divine nature, which is accomplished by the so-called supernaturally infused virtues, which, however, have sanctifying grace as their origin.

Through Christian faith we attain a supernatural and a divine knowledge; through Christian hope a supernatural and divine confidence; and through Christian love there is infused through the Holy Ghost, who in virtue of sanctifying grace dwells within us, a love of God similar to that which He cherishes within Himself. Through these three theological or divine virtues, the root of which is the above-mentioned grace, we are placed in immediate proximity to God; they unite the spirit with God, as He is in Himself.¹

¹ We must refrain here from entering any deeper into this doctrine; there is here merely question of principle. Speculatively and deeply considered by Scheeben, *Dogm.* II, 308ff.; popularly in *Herrlichkeiten der Gnade* of the same, III. Buch, 3-6c.

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But, though the spirit be thus equipped, still it is by no means able, without the supernatural motion of the Holy Ghost, to pass on to a supernatural activity, just as the creature, though perfect in essence and in potentialities, needs nevertheless in the natural order the motion of God for each action. The reason of this consists in the total dependence of man upon God both in the natural and in the supernatural order.

Nevertheless this grace, which is called actual grace, is closely connected with sanctifying grace, which flows from the head — Christ — into each of His true members and is the source of the whole life of salvation. Just as our nature establishes for us a claim upon the natural aid of God, upon His motions in our natural activity, so does nature likewise, elevated by sanctifying grace above all things created, make us worthy of the supernatural aid of the Holy Ghost for every supernatural activity.¹ No longer as mere creatures, but as children and

¹ Hereby we by no means wish to say that the help of supernatural grace is only conferred upon those who are already in sanctifying grace. Faith in itself, as well as the mere wish thereof and not simply faith active through love, is a supernatural effect of grace. Thus teaches the Council of Trent (Sess. VI, 5 and 6) that the justification of the adults has its beginning in an antecedent grace secured for us by Christ. Yet, considered even from this point of view, efficacious grace is closely related to sanctifying grace, since the former prepares for the latter and leads it into us. If sanctifying grace appears above as the source of efficacious grace, then it becomes here the end thereof.

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heirs of God, into which state sanctifying grace has first transferred us, have we the right to claim the divine influences which are proper to this state.¹

Thus we have given all the prerequisites for the transformation of man and of society, which is the object of the Catholic Church and we know the means by which the individual is elevated into the supernatural order, and which place him in close proximity to God and put him into possession of the supernatural gifts.

In fact, what has accomplished the transformation and renovation of man, about which we have inquired in the beginning? Or, does not everything appear to us really transformed? The reason and the will, action and activity? What is it that has transformed the uneducated and timid disciples into Apostles, strong in faith and willing to be sacrificed and even put to death? Wherein consisted that wonderful principle which distinguished the first Christians from the pagans? "As the soul permeates every member of the body, so do the Christians every country of the world. But as the soul really dwells in the body, but has not its origin from the body, so do Christians live in the world, but are not of the world."² What is the reason of this manifestation? Grace alone has

¹ Compare Scheeben, *Glories of Grace*, III. book 8 and 9 chap.

² *Epistola. ad Diognet.* c. 6.

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created those Apostles, it has made the saints and has always checked, in every true member of the body of Christ, the worldly aspirations and removed all pride and self-will. It has elevated all true members of the body of Christ above themselves; it has enabled them to trample under foot that which natural man considers supreme. “In children and virgins it could be clearly observed how they covered the charm of their weakness with superhuman virtues as with an armor; how wives preserved, amidst the greatest trials, the robe of their virtue immaculate in the matrimonial state; how soldiers, intoxicated by the tumult of battle, turned down the sword for a better victory than that of their leaders, and war itself was bridled by a humaneness which it never had witnessed before. Kings ornamented their diadems with the sign of the most disgraceful of all punishments of death and subjected their majesty to that of God and acknowledged the vanity of terrestrial greatness, even of the most supreme. The barbarians, nourished upon blood, the savages, sunk into beastly deformity, listened to the voice which called them to adopt manners and politeness, and all things upon earth, people, kingdoms, genius, wisdom, crime, and virtue, honor and shame, all were effected by a breath which healed and transformed.”¹ Indeed,

¹ Letters of Lacordaire, p. 21.

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what neither sword, nor gold, nor law, nor science, nor speech could accomplish, that was effected by that inner secret power, that inner source of supernatural activity, which we do not see, which is concealed to the senses, but which manifests itself through its action in weak creatures.

Ever since the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross a great drama is enacted before us. Christ no longer personally walks upon earth among us, it is true, and still we see around us as many Christs as there are members of the body of Christ in His Church. Their morals are formed according to His divine morals; their virtues are merely the expression of His divine virtues and their lives, to use the expression of the Apostle, are but the manifestation of His divine life. (II. Cor. IV, 11.) If Plato calls man, because he transcends the sensible world and is a citizen of two worlds, “a heavenly and not an earthly growth”; if Philo, for the same reason, says that man is “the true temple of God upon earth,”¹ then what name does that man deserve whose life is hidden with Christ in God? (Col. III, 3.) *Christianus alter Christus*, “the Christian is another Christ”² — verily, this is henceforth the watchword of that generation which had its origin at the foot of the cross. It is Christ Him-

¹ Plato, *Tinaeus*, 90a; Philo, I, p. 653, 22.

² Compare S. Cyprianus, *De idol. vanit. c. II.*

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self who lives in us in virtue of that grace and transforms us into Himself.

Is this not the grandest proof of the divinity of our holy religion? Does not this life prove more effectively than all science and human sagacity can that the Catholic Church is not of this world? Origen only reluctantly consented to make use of a scientific refutation of the objections advanced by the pagan philosopher Celsus against Christianity. The most striking defense thereof, he claimed, is the conduct of those who profess it.¹ In fact, the scientific proofs are not accessible to every reason and, since there is question of supernatural truths, they never touch the inner substance thereof.

But the life of a true member of the Catholic Church convinces every observer that this is not a life according to the flesh, nor even a life according to the natural spirit. As the supernatural truths compel him to acknowledge that he does not understand them, so is he also obliged to acknowledge, at the sight of such a life, that he cannot live up to it, that it surpasses his natural strength! The mere admission, that supernatural truths transcend the powers of my comprehension, does not so readily move me to admit their divinity. But the fact and the sight of a life which compared to my life is as

¹ *Contra Celsum*, I, 1.

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day is to night, and to attain which I have not even the courage, much less do I feel the power within me, forces me to acknowledge that: *Vere digitus Dei est hic*, “Truly the finger of God is here.”

II. The Sacraments — The Means of Grace

Man is regenerated for a supernatural life through a supernatural power — through grace. Through it he enters into communion with Christ, it effects that necessary union between the head and the members of which we have spoken above. The spirit of Christ, His power, His grace, and His beauty are diffused into every member of His body, so that the declaration of the Apostle is verified in every living member of the Church: *Mihi vivere Christus est*, “For to me, to live is Christ.” (Phil. I, 21.)

But how do we receive this grace? This is a point of vast importance and opens for us a deep inside into the Church and into the condition of the present state of society. Here we learn to know, in the best possible manner, that the Church is a social power.

Therefore, how do we receive grace, how do we gain possession of the treasures of grace which we have just described?

Apart from Christ's positive arrangement, which

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no man can nor dare change and which is entirely dependent upon His own free will, the assumption that we receive grace without any intervention of exterior means, is in itself not the least conformable to human nature. Man is not only a spirit, he is a complex being, composed of soul and body, his salvation must diffuse itself in a visibly-invisible manner over his life. Thus, God indeed has redeemed us, but to do so He appeared visibly on earth; He redeemed us as the God-man. Thus, too, we are put in possession of the truths necessary for our salvation, without any admixture of error, by God through the Catholic Church, but man, the actual Vicar of Christ, is for this purpose the visible organ of Christ.

The same manifestation is also here visible. Our elevation into the supernatural order, the association and union with Christ, is likewise connected with visible signs. But as is done concerning the Church so also is the connection between the supernatural and the natural misjudged. In fact, in what light do most men to-day regard the sacraments of the Catholic Church? What are they often-times considered? After having begun to judge of the Church just as they do about any other association or human society and after the manifestation of the continuous operation of Christ in the Church, as in His mystical body, had vanished from the

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minds of most men, they regarded the sacraments of the Catholic Church nothing more than mere outward signs and forms without any inward value, whereby one simply acknowledges admission into the Church as one would the admission into any worldly corporation by any mere acts or external formalities.

But the sacraments are something more exalted. In the Church there are no mere forms and signs without inward value; they are all animated by an inner spirit. For what is a sacrament? The sacraments are those outward signs, instituted by Christ, which supply us with the grace of salvation, which flows from the sacrifice of the cross by means of the sacrifice of the Mass, which latter renews the sacrifice of the cross as well as its continuous efficacy.

The sacraments give us the grace of Christ. This depends, of course, solely upon their institution by Christ, just as all that concerns our spiritual end, can have only Him, the restorer of the supernatural order, as its originator and source. Christ could, indeed, have made us partakers of the efficacy and the fruits of His precious blood without the means of the sacraments. But, nevertheless, He ordained for that purpose sacramental mediation. Granting, therefore, their institution we behold most clearly the inner connection of the whole

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economy of salvation. If it is erroneous to deny that the blood of Christ or His passion or His humanity are the true causes of our justification and of grace, then it is equally erroneous to deny that the sacraments are the efficacious instrumental causes of our salvation, of grace, and justification. He who denies the latter calls into question, in a general way, the sin-destroying power of the blood of Christ, which, as the price of salvation, is communicated to the individual through the reception of the sacraments. Who can possibly discover herein, that the sacraments are the instruments of Christ, a contradiction, since every one is forced to admit that the humanity of Christ could be and was an instrument of God for the purpose of effecting the redemption of man?¹ The power of the sacraments consists just as little in the sensible signs as the power of the humanity of Christ is attributable to it as a mere humanity, apart from its union with God. The power of the sacraments is the BLOOD OF CHRIST, which is transmitted through them. Only because they contain the blood of Christ within themselves, do they likewise contain grace and the remission of sin. It is therefore that in Holy Scripture the same efficacy is ascribed to the blood of Christ and to the sacraments.² If it is

¹ See Canus, *Rel. de sacram. in gen.*, IV, p. 900, ed. 1754.

² I. John I, 7; Revel. I, 5; XII, 11; Rom. III, 25.

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therefore said of the latter that they cleanse us, purify us, that they are the cause of our victory, of our remission of sin and of justification, they will also produce the said effects by the same law according to which the blood of Christ cleanses souls and remits sins. Need this create any surprise in us? Is not the God-man, Christ Jesus, at all times and everywhere the foundation of our salvation, whether it be in the cross or in the sacrifices of the Mass or in the sacraments? "Who from God is made unto us . . . justice and sanctification and redemption." (I. Cor. I, 30.)

The blood of Christ is, therefore, not only efficacious in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, but also in all other sacraments, but not in the same manner, but rather in accordance with the special object for which each one has been instituted. Thus the blood of Christ effects, for instance, both in the sacrament of baptism and in the sacrament of penance remission of sin, but in the latter in a different manner than in the former. In baptism, which is the sacrament of regeneration, the entire guilt and punishment is remitted, but not so in the sacrament of penance; the guilt indeed is remitted, but not the complete punishment due it, not until full satisfaction is made.¹ Even so does the blood of

¹ Canus, *De loc. theolog.* XII, 12.; Conc. *Trid.* Sess. VI, c. 14 (Denziger, n. 690.)

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Christ effect in the rest of the sacraments remission of sin, but not directly, since they are not primarily instituted for this purpose.

Brethren, do you also wish to regard the sacraments as mere outward ceremonies? Through their reception supernatural justice and sanctity can be gained or nourished or increased, or, if lost, restored. Through them we enter into that union with Christ which is so necessary for our eternal destiny, because the grace which effects this union is only transmitted through the sacraments: and now you would have us be filled with a sort of contempt for the channels of this grace? What! Christ is the center of the supernatural; He is the end of the entire creation: and now you would have us be indifferent to an institution by means of which we attain unity with this center? Let us rather behold precisely in the sacraments the most efficacious means of the Church by which she can become, in her own manner, a great social power.

Let us consider especially those four sacraments of which there is mainly question here: Baptism, Penance, the Holy Eucharist, and Matrimony. Was it not precisely through these that the Catholic Church renovated humanity individually and in its entirety? She elevated it into the supernatural order (by Baptism and by Penance), she brought it into the closest communion with Christ (by the

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sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Matrimony), and, to consider especially the two last, are they not the root of apostolic love and Christian charity?

The adorable Sacrament of the Altar has become the banquet to which the Catholic Church daily leads souls entrusted to her in order that there they may sacrifice themselves for their brethren. She speaks but one word and her priests and missionaries go forth into the four quarters of the globe, they go into exile, as it were, they renounce that which is dearest upon earth — country and family. They adopt those as brethren for whom they feel not the slightest natural inclination, and amidst the greatest difficulties they sacrifice their natural life for the supernatural life of their brethren. Whence comes this power? Thousands of Sisters of Charity lead a life against which human nature revolts. They nurse the sick from whom everything turns them with disgust, dread, and fear; they nurse them with a tenderness and patience, aye, with the very complacency with which a young mother nourishes her first suckling babe. Amidst the terrors of death, amidst the most frightful tragedies of the battle-field, where the hearts of brave veterans tremble, the Sister moves about quietly and collectedly. She knows no joys of life save the renunciation of all joys.¹ Whence comes

¹ Compare Baumstark, *Unsere Wege*, s. 104.

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this power? 'Tis true, love of sacrifice was at all times the motive power of the Christian care of the poor and the sick; but whence comes the power of this love of sacrifice? Whence comes the power for all to lead a truly Catholic life, full of self-denial and mortification, full of love and self-sacrifice, even for those from whom one only reaps scorn and contempt, spoliation and every sort of privation?

Brethren, will you still ask: Whence comes this power? Does it not come solely and entirely from the reception of that most Holy Sacrament which is especially called the Sacrament of Love? It is there that the faithful soul learns to know and to value her neighbor, not only as an image of God, but as a precious member of the body of Christ; there, in Holy communion, the faithful soul feels herself broad enough to embrace all mankind. In the poor, in the sick and the abandoned, aye, even in her scoffers and her persecutors, she sees her brethren and her sisters, children and heirs of God and co-heirs of Christ. The center of her love is no longer her personal "Ego." "I live," she says with the Apostle, "but no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. II, 20.) Christ is the center of her love, and as she feels Him operating within herself, so, too, does she see Him in her neighbor; and hence her love.

And what shall I say of Christian marriage? Is it still lawful to speak of Christian marriage in this

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age of civil marriage and of divorce? The supernatural alone has impressed upon marriage a character of greatness. As Christ manifests Himself in the whole Church, so also does He appear here as the center: "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." (I. Cor. XI, 3.) How grandly does this point of view disclose marriage to us? How exalted it becomes through the sacrament? Even the Apostle writes: "This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church." (Ephes. V, 32.) Through the elevation of marriage to the dignity of a sacrament among Christians society is entirely consecrated to God, since man and woman united in Christ are to love each other as Christ loves His Church and also as Christ and the Church are consecrated to God; but through the married couple the whole family and through it the whole society is sanctified. Thus marriage is a type and a figure of the union between the Church and Christ, aye, a figure of God Himself, through the generation of men according to the likeness of God.¹

Thus the Apostle introduces the explanation of marriage into the inmost relation to Christ — as the head of the Church — in these words: "The husband is the head of the wife: as Christ is the head of

¹ Ventura, *Die katholische Frau*, I, s. 116.

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the Church. He is the savior of His body." (Ephes. V, 23; see 24-33.) From this also follows its indissolubility, strange as it may appear. In the Old Covenant marriage was indissoluble, because it prophetically indicated, in the distant future, the mystery of that ineffable union of Christ and the Church. In the New Covenant it is indissoluble among Christians, because marriage of the baptized persons is a perfect sign of the union of Christ and His Church, but this union is indissoluble. For the Divine Word never deposed the human nature which it once assumed, and never the Church — His Bride. Thus the unity and the indissolubility of marriage between husband and wife is the consequence of the unity and indissolubility of the marriage of Christ to His Church. The relations of the marriage between husband and wife are founded upon the relations which God has established in the marriage of Christ and His Church.¹ Brethren, did you ever consider marriage from this point of view, which is the supernatural and therefore the only correct one? Are we not here again confronted by that fundamental law, which we have fully explained above, of the supernatural order of the world: Christ must reign over all!

If we were first to examine that other sacrament

¹ In order not to protract this discourse too long, I refer to Ventura, I, p. 107 sqq. See Leo XIII, Encycl. of Feb. 10, 1880 (on marriage) p. 102, sqq.

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which makes men the dispensers of the sacraments, would we not find in those who go forth as the representatives of Christ, to conquer the world for Christ, a world-renewing force? But it is not our purpose to enter here into each individual sacrament; it is sufficient for us to have gained the conviction that the Church possesses no greater means for the accomplishment of her purpose than the holy sacraments and that these are at the same time the instruments of help, upon the use of which depends the attainment of the salvation of men as well as the union between Christ, the head, and the members of the Church.

Let us now apply this result to the present state of society. After having submitted it to a very close scrutiny and no longer doubting that it lies prostrate through a mortal cancerous affection, let us ask ourselves: Whose fault is this, is it the fault of man or of woman? Just as the woman is the receiving principle in the physical order, but man the active, so, too, generally speaking, is the man in the moral order the active and the woman the receiving principle. Thus it happens in many cases of good, in most cases of evil and of error. The origin of error is, without doubt, the work of man; albeit it only has a chance of success and duration in as far as women interpose and cultivate error.¹

¹ See Ventura, s. 11 sqq.

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Who is really the originator of the great commotion in the present state of society? Is it the man or the woman? Men have carried the poison of error into religion, they were at all times and everywhere, as ecclesiastical and secular history testify, the founders of all heresies, and they have alienated the nations from their eternal destiny. Men have carried the poison of error into realms of science, they are to blame for the fact that there is really no science to-day which has not abandoned God. They have raised the alleged contradiction between faith and reason into a principle. Men have carried the poison of error into the domain of politics; they are the originators of those political principles which have reduced the Christian States to the level of paganism and have lowered the moral organism of human society to a mere mechanism. Men have carried the poison of error into the present industrial world; they have conjured up a storm against prayer, against holy days, against religious orders, as if these withdrew the resources of labor and advanced them in price and diminished the production of a people. Men are the originators of the two frightful specters, continental freemasonry and the "Internationale," which, like parasites, surround with their tendrils all social and political structures and the aim of which is a complete revolution of ancient society and the construction of a

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future godless State. It is the men who misuse the press and public opinion in order to attack religion and the Church and to brand all rulers as objects deserving of hatred and who rob the people and the world more and more of faith in a true and high morality and purity of life. Yes, men are the originators of this deadly cancerous affection of our present society. I say: the originators, for in the fuller development of error woman's activity is not excluded. The constantly widening agitation of certain female circles is a sign of how far the evil has already progressed.

But are the men also the most zealous in the reception of the sacraments? Not contented with not being the most zealous, in many cases they are not even partakers of the two great sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and it is precisely they who have divested the sacrament of Matrimony of its supernatural character and degraded it to a mere civil contract.

But how does this harmonize with that which we have just said of men inasmuch as they are the originators of the moral evil in society? Is there really no connection between these two facts? On the contrary, there is and a very intimate one. Christ is the center of the supernatural order of the world and this order of the world is the only possible state of humanity. Apostasy from Christ is, *de facto*,

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apostasy from God. But how do you apostatize from Christ? From our above explanation it is evident that this apostasy takes place when through sin the union between Christ, the head, and the individual members is dissolved. Mortal sin robs us of sanctifying grace and this is precisely the bond of union between Christ and ourselves. Thus it is that man becomes bereft of life, without power — and life and power he is expected to communicate to society; but in order to communicate it he must possess it himself; but he can only attain both through union with Christ, the beginning and the end of creation. How will he regain this life if once forfeited? Is there no means? Yes, indeed, there are means by which we can regain union with Christ, by means of which we become once more partakers of the influence of supernatural grace. These are the sacraments, and, in this particular case, the sacrament of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist. But far from making use of these means and becoming again united to the fountain of life and of power, to the cause of our salvation, many have become so brazen as to scoff at these instruments in the hands of the God-man as mere medieval institutions and even a successful attempt has been made to change public opinion, so that, by means of this queen of the world, the reception of the holy sacraments may be despised and mostly

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there where it is most necessary and indispensable for the salvation of mankind. For the close observer of our times no proof is required to convince him of this. What follows? For the direction and the uplifting of humanity, which is ordained both collectively and individually, for a supernatural end and which has its center in Christ, purely natural powers and human sagacity to the exclusion of the supernatural, are not sufficient. Instead of conferring blessings and happiness upon humanity, the above-mentioned men only spread ruin and damnation. Man separated from Christ is the grave-digger of humanity.

Brethren, whoever has been once in the catacombs of Rome, in spirit often afterwards reverts thereto. Where can the Christian soul find greater matter for meditation, more reason for longing and hope, than in those very holy places? What kind of a generation were, in fact, the Christians of that age who dwelled in these subterranean tombs in the days of the Christian persecutions? Verily, they were a new humanity, a generation without ancestors, men devoted, strong, courageous, unterrified, in short, heroes, such as the world had never seen before. "The universe with its weight of forty centuries fell upon the consciences of these heroes, and Rome added to this pressure of antiquity the blood-dripping ax of its frightful might. What

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had occurred? nothing more than that in Judea a man had died on the cross. This, besides their own blood, was the only counterpoise that they could bring to bear against this world-machine, as it was at that time and had always been. After many days, spent in fasting and in silence, there were brought before them in the evening, between the shades of night and the light of the torches, the martyred bodies of some among them. They counted the wounds, they saw with their own eyes and touched with their own hands the furrows, which the cruel tortures had dug into those weak members, unprotected against the powers of the empire, and they, who had gathered there in pious devotion, reported with feeble voice the cry of rage of the masses against the martyrs and the unshaken patience of the latter. No tears fell upon the sad remains, for the ancient Church wept not, she hoped. Every corpse that was concealed under those arched vaults was for her a niche in the City of God, the foundation of a future victory.”¹

Brethren, has the Catholic Church ceased to dwell in the catacombs? She, of course, no longer passes her days in those subterranean caves of Rome, her children no longer encounter the wild beasts of the amphitheater in bloody conflict; but in Europe and beyond the Catholic Church is the target of

¹ Lacordaire, p. 148. German ed.

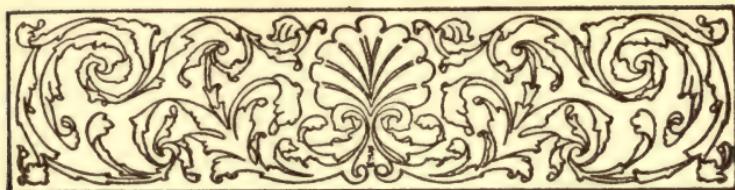
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hatred, which is no less intense than that of ancient Rome and of its Cæsars. Rome, the capital of Catholic Christendom — wrenched from the Church; the Vicar of Christ — a prisoner in the Vatican; Catholic countries delivered into the hands of the most bitter enemies of the Church and ransacked by secret societies! The terrorized world is tottering and hanging over frightful abysses, the hand of the clock is pointing towards the eleventh hour — and should we now become disheartened and lose courage? Brethren, no! Are not we also, as we have seen in this discourse, a generation like unto that of the first Christians? Like unto them we feel a divine blood coursing through our veins, a blood unknown before the appearance of Christ, and which started at the foot of the cross. *Christianus alter Christus*, “the Christian is another Christ.” We are too great to admit entrance either to anxiety or to fear. We are members of the body of Christ; we live by the same spirit as does He and we are animated by the same life, which is proper to Him, for “I am the vine,” He says, “ye are the branches.” Therefore, let us lay aside our timidity; let us be heroes like the early Christians. They saved the world, and if society is to be saved to-day, it will be done through the Christians, because they alone possess the necessary supernatural power. This is the conclusion which follows from the truth that

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the entire humanity lives in the supernatural order of the world of which Christ is the center and we are the rays. Let the enemies of the Catholic Church attack her as much as they will, let them wage war against the Lamb which is daily offered in her and through which each one of the faithful enters into the closest communion with It: "The Lamb shall overcome them, because He is the Lord of lords, and the King of kings, and they that are with Him are called, and elect, and faithful." (Rev. XVII, 14.)





THE SIXTH DISCOURSE

THE PERFECTION OF HUMANITY THROUGH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

“All things were created by him and in him. And he is before all and by him all things consist.” — (Col. I, 16, 17.)

DURING the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius the Roman empire was visited by its greatest calamities. Devastating wars on the borders and revolutions in the interior. And scarcely had the victorious armies returned to Rome when a contagious disease broke out which depopulated the whole of Italy. In Rome thousands upon thousands descended into the graves, not only of the poorer classes, but also of the highest. The consequences of this pest were of a far more serious and lasting nature than is generally the case even among the most destructive manifestations of such a kind. To these dreadful evils were added failure of crops, famine which visited Italy twice during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and many

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conflagrations. In truth, evils and misfortunes which were the more dreadful since they came at the same time upon the nations and, therefore, made upon them a deeper impression the lower the power of life and of resistance of the intellectual and material forces proved themselves.¹ That which, as a rule, appears under similar circumstances and calamities was not lacking: a return to serious reflection. The Roman people possessed a deep religious sentiment,—in the return to the religion of the fathers they believed to find the means of healing the wounds which had been inflicted upon them by the above-enumerated misfortunes.

Brethren, in our previous discourses we have had sufficient opportunities to consider the interior and the exterior decay of modern society. Of this we have become convinced: Modern society is on the verge of ruination. This society itself feels; it knows that it is supremely unhappy, and though it may mistake the cause of its misfortunes, still it acknowledges the fact.²

But to us that cause is no longer concealed. Apostasy from God has been converted into apostasy from Christ in the Christian order of the world and from His Church, and herein alone we must recognize the fundamental evil of modern society.

¹ Compare Reumont, *History of the City of Rome* I, p. 484 sqq.

² Compare the introduction to the First Discourse.

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But to know the root of the evil is tantamount to knowing the means of salvation. In fact, the Catholic Church, through her sacraments, is alone that pool into which we must descend to be cleansed from our disorders. (John V, 2. sqq.) In the Catholic Church we recognize that tree of life, planted by the divine hand, which spreads its branches and twigs all over the whole world, in order that all may gather fruit therefrom, after the eating of which no man will hunger any more. The Catholic Church has proved herself to be to us the Bride of Christ, destined to continue the work of redemption unto the consummation of the world and to lead all nations to their eternal destiny. Where, therefore, can we find our happiness? Does not our salvation and happiness consist in the return to the Catholic Church? Most assuredly it does, and this we will prove in this discourse, which will be at the same time the closing link in the chain of all preceding proofs. We will, therefore, consider the perfection of humanity through the Catholic Church.

I. Peace and Perfection of Mankind only in Christ Jesus

1. Unity in Variety.

Unity in variety is a significant character in all of God's works. We might examine all the per-

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fections of a thing and consider it from all sides,—only then will we know and comprehend it perfectly if we comprehend its various perfections not separately but in their entirety, in which they are harmoniously joined together, like so many different parts.

As this unity in variety shows itself in all the works of God so does it also manifest itself in the entirety in the world. The universe is a wonderful chain of parts and of links of which each is either sub-, preter-, or super-ordained to the rest, but in either case combined to each other. The world forms one whole, consisting of manifold parts, of which, indeed, each has its definite nature and through it its particular activity; but the action and, therefore, the nature of the several parts are not independent of each other, but, on the contrary, they act upon each other, construct and sustain each other mutually, in order to contribute in this manner to the perfection of the entire universe, to the common good of the whole.¹

But in the sciences also do we see this unity in diversity. The various sciences are mere members of one grand system, even though it may not appear to us that they are members of a whole, yet disconnected pieces of which each is in itself complete.

¹ Aristoteles, *Metaph.* XII, 10; St. Thomas I. q. 65. a. 2; 2 dist. 1. q. 1. a. 1. See Kleutgen, *Philos. of Antiquit.* II, no. 781 sqq.

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But why, then, does each science disemboque into metaphysics, if it wishes to proceed to its last causes?¹

This unity in variety is also a fundamental principle of the *beautiful* and the first law of art.

But not merely in blind nature — but also in free man (and we are only engaged with him in this discourse) whether we consider him in connection with others or only in himself, we find this law or, rather, a tendency toward this law. Every individual man has a craving to dispose even the most diversified actions toward one end; unity, in spite of the diversity of the several members is the sustaining principle of the family; unity in variety, is the aimed-at effort of the entire community.

But, Brethren, let us ask ourselves: What is the reason of this striving after unity? It is, most assuredly, nothing else than seeking after rest, consequently completeness or perfection. Just as the world would be supremely incomplete in itself and imperfect, if its heterogeneous parts were not brought under the law of unity and harmony; just as the several sciences then only reach their thoroughness when they represent one unique, grand system as a great intelligent antitype of the world, so will society only then have reached its completeness and the end of its desires, when it will be united

¹ Trendelenburg, *Log. Investig.* I, p. 5 sqq. II, p. 411.

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by a bond that will encircle the world. For then the desire for eternal peace will be satisfied — when it has become a humanity without discord and division — but with that desire the longing for happiness is also satisfied — humanity will appear in its perfection.¹

But striving after unity is always, consciously or unconsciously, a seeking after completeness and perfection. But if this be so, then humanity has never ceased to strive after perfection, and least so in these our days. Aye, I am not afraid to assert that modern society seems to display a greater longing after perfection than any previous age has done. In fact, what is the meaning of progress? Nothing else, indeed, than going or stepping forward and not backward. But to step forward is surely striving after perfection. We never dream of striving after a thing that we already possess. I strive after something precisely because I want it, and because in its acquisition I wish to satisfy a want. There-

¹ Peace, therefore, the suppression of all discord and division, is like happiness, the ultimate aim of all our endeavors. The prophet Isaias designates it as “the fulness of time” “and they shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they be exercised any more to war.” (Isa. II, 4.) Then “there shall be no end of peace.” (Isa. IX, 7.) The philosopher says: Happiness seems to be found in rest, to attain which we devote ourselves to business just as we carry on war in order to enjoy peace. (*Ethic. Nicom.*, X, 7).

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fore I intend through striving and through progress, in general, to approach nearer to perfection.¹

Now, what is the character of our age? Is it not that of progress? Does not every one assert that our age differs from all preceding ages in the immense progress which has been made, not only in one, but almost in all the domains of human knowledge and industry? Yes, this is the answer, and this praise of our age is on the lips of all and we are not the least disposed to diminish it inasmuch as it is well founded. If we were to translate it into our own language, in keeping with what we said above concerning the given notion of "progress," then it would read thus: The nineteenth and the twentieth centuries are mainly distinguished from all others in the greater effort to attain thoroughness and perfection.

But, Brethren, another question is this: Does society really approach nearer to perfection? To a mere superficial observer it might appear that, after the disappearance of the limits of space and time through the power of telegraphy and railways and the intercourse between the various countries has been, compared to former times, greatly accelerated, we are not so very far away from the time in which a common union will connect all and human-

¹ On the question of progress see R. Schultes, O. P. *Rays of Light in Philos. and Theolog.* to illumine the problems of progress.

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ity will have attained the end of its desires. This hope, however, is a great delusion. As near as nations and people stand to each other to-day, so embittered and inimical are they toward each other. Nations seek their glory in conquering others. States and empires maintain their existence at the expense of neighboring States. When were wars more bloody than in the past century? Have not the graves on battle-fields devoured more people in a few weeks than the wars of former times did in a century?¹ It seems that nations are dominated by a real mania of shedding blood! Forever they seem to face each other as enemies, and when they meet it is in furious battle of life and death. Can this possibly be perfection? By no means! This is a condition just the reverse of perfection, for the latter consists in unity without discord and without division, and precisely these two excluded factors are the distinguishing features of our age.

But, have we not recognized in the striving after perfection the most prominent character of our age? How can these two distinctive features be compatible with the same humanity?

Brethren, from the fact that every man has within himself a craving after happiness, aye, that everything he does is solely done for happiness and to be

¹ We only need point to the Russian-Japanese war with its half-million of victims of dead and wounded.

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happy,¹ from this it by no means follows that he is actually happy. Man is not free in regard to his craving after happiness, it is his by nature; he is only free in regard to the selection of the object in which he places his happiness and in regard to the means necessary for the acquisition of that object.² If man places his happiness in an object which cannot satisfy the infinite craving of his heart, then, in spite of this craving, aye, precisely on account of it, will he remain unhappy. In like manner, we cannot conclude from the fact that we naturally crave after happiness that this craving actually leads us to perfection. This rather depends upon the aim of our craving and the selection of which is committed to our liberty.

But, what is the aim of modern progress, whither do all movements of the age tend? Not only has modern progress a false aim in many affairs — but its efforts are not directed to any definite aim, its aim is rather the indefinite. Do you doubt this? And yet the truth of this assertion must strike you, because we have seen in the first discourse how the present age especially denies those firm and eternally true principles or questions them, upon which alone man can, through his activity, uplift himself. But,

¹ See Index Aristot., p. 292b, 35 sqq.

² St. Thomas, q. 22. *de verit.* a. 7. Rubeis, *de peccato originali*, c. 34.

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does not that horrid haste and unrest, that confusion and helplessness which we discover in all the provinces of human activity, convince us of the above truth? What century has brought forth more systems of government and a greater fluctuating quantity of laws than ours? With what haste are not the most important laws introduced and enacted in a few days? How groundlessly are not constitutions of States changed? France alone has witnessed sixteen changes within seventy years! The history of philosophical systems at the end of the eighteenth century, down to our present days, comprises at least the fifth part of the history of philosophy, that is, of a period of more than two thousand years. The aim of modern industry is: to produce indefinitely for the sake of indefinite enjoyment; to create necessities indefinitely in order to increase indefinite enjoyments. "Luxury was at one time looked upon as a vice and it was considered ruinous to people; now it has become a virtue and that people is considered the most thorough which is capable of consuming the most."¹ The maxim of political economy of to-day is: The highest possible mark of consumption.

But what does this haste and unrest indicate? What does this chasing after an indefinite aim, or,

¹ Joerg. *History of social parties*, p. 107. (German.)

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rather, after no aim denote?¹ Does it prove that our age is nearerer perfection? But perfection without an end or an aim is a contradiction in terms. A thing or an activity is precisely perfect through an attainment of its proposed aim. All motion and activity is merely a striving after rest, after the perfected end, whereas all endeavors of our age seem to be merely movements for the sake of motion, progress without aim or end. As much as the progress of our days may be extolled, the truth is that never was man farther away from perfection than just now.

But this disquietude and haste leads us to the reasons which give us an explanation of the fierce hatred of races, which we mentioned above, and which exists in spite of the fact that everywhere there are manifestations of efforts to establish unity and peace. In order to bind diverse things into one whole they must have a common center and, in order that the efforts of a people may be realized in establishing unity and perfection, they must possess some point of unification.

But where is this point of unification to be found? Where is that center in which all must concentrate? Here, Brethren, is the point which not only presents the connection of all the truths hitherto con-

¹ We are showing the contradiction of modern progress merely from its aim, though its result would lead us to the same conclusion.

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sidered in the clearest light possible, but exhibits with renewed luster the principles of the Catholic Church as the only correct ones to accomplish the perfection of humanity.

2. The parting prayer of Christ for unity of the faithful.

“For them do I pray who through their word shall believe in me: *that they may be one*, as Thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou hast given me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as we also are one. I in them, and Thou in me: that they may be perfect in one, and the world may know that Thou hast sent me.” (John XVII, 20-23.)

Grand mystery! Sent to be the redeemer and the restorer of the human race, Christ knows no more beautiful prayer to address to His Father before His death for the redemption, than the prayer that all may be one as He and the Father are one.

Sint unum! That they be one among themselves, He says, “as Thou and I are one.” This His last will and testament, His parting address to the world: The gathering of those scattered, the approaching to each other of those who stand aloof from one another, the union of the divided and the reunion of man to God. But, which is the point of reunion? “I in them and Thou in me.” Therefore, Christ

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Jesus is the center of the reunion between us and God, and, therefore, also between ourselves. According to the expression of St. Paul, "He is our peace, who hath made both one" (Judaism and paganism) "and breaking down the middle-wall of partition, the enmities, . . . that He might make the two in Himself into one new man, making peace." (Ephes. II, 14, 15.) This harmonizes most beautifully with that which we have already considered in the second discourse concerning Christ as the restorer and the aim of the human race. How forcibly this most incontestable agreement on all points proves that Christ alone can possibly be the center in whom all may and must unite, since "all truth must agree with itself from every point of view, because reality must harmonize with truth which puts itself in direct contradiction very soon with falsehood."¹ Did we not then remark that in the Incarnation of the Second Person we were all united in Him, that the personal union of the human nature with God is the ennobling of the entire created nature, a union of the finite with the Infinite?² Did we not then, according to an entirely logical deduction, establish from the sacrificial death and mediatorship of Christ, as a fundamental

¹ Aristot. *Anal.* p. I, 32; *Ethic Nicom.*, I, 8.

² Athanasius, *Orat.* 3; St. Thomas, III, q. 1. a. 1. See Petavius, *de Incarn.* II, 8. no. 8.

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law of the actual order of the world, the principle: Christ must reign over all? And we concluded, with the same logical deduction, in the third discourse, from the universality of the Catholic Church to the center of this universality, to Christ Jesus; for never could she be universal if she did not contain within herself the principle of unity, and precisely this one principle — Christ Jesus. But in the two last discourses Christ Jesus manifested Himself to us, from other deductions, as the desired center of unity in whom alone the craving of the human mind and the heart finds its rest, and through whom alone happiness can be attained.

But the most cogent reason of this truth is found in the last end of the human race. The final perfection of a thing consists in the reunion thereof with its origin, which is at the same time the end of the thing perfected thereby, as even the ancient philosophers taught.¹ But, as we have seen above, Christ Jesus is in a twofold manner the origin and the end of all men: once as God, inasmuch as He is the ideal, the cause and the end of creation in the natural order; then again as God-man, inasmuch as He became for all the source of supernatural happiness. The final perfection of all rational creatures can therefore, as a matter of fact, only

¹ Aristoteles, *De part. anim.* I, 1; *Phys.* II, 7. St. Thomas, 2, dist. 18. q. 2. a. 2; 4 dist. 8. q. 1. a. 1 ad 1.

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consist in the reunion with this source, with Christ, through which reunion we enter into the closest communion with God Himself, who in Christ is personally united with human nature “that God may be all in all.” (I. Cor. XV, 28.) It was precisely on account of this that, in our last discourse, sanctifying grace manifested itself to us as the most precious gift of God, because by means of it man, created by God, returns to God, in which return, in a spiritual circle as it were, the perfection of all rational creatures consists.¹

From all this it preeminently follows that Christ must be the desired center of the unification of humanity. But, is He this in reality for the human race?

II. Humanity is not tending toward Christ

In order that humanity may have Christ for its center it must first have a tendency towards Him; but it cannot tend towards Him if it does not love Him, for desire is an inclination towards that which is agreeable and pleasing. But does the human race love Christ Jesus? We have already remarked that the inordinate man loves only himself, but not God. But, if man loves not God, then he does not

¹ St. Bonaventura. *Brevil.* V. 2; St. Thomas, 1. dist, 14, q. 2. a 2. Just as we were created by the Word, so, too, must we, through the Incarnate Word, return to our origin.

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tend toward Christ, for “if God were our Father, you would indeed love me,” He said to the Jews. (John VIII, 42.) Yes, indeed, the inordinate man loves only himself, he is his own center of love, the aim of all his endeavors. And this is precisely the root of all the evil of modern society, the prevention of its perfection and the power that forces toward retrogression. Though of this there are many proofs, still we will content ourselves with bringing forth only one.

Wherein does unity manifest itself in the variety of the human race? In the co-operation of three factors: of liberty, of peace, and of good order. Peace and order pertain to every species of perfection; they may be justly designated as the object striven after in every effort and finally attained. But in humanity lasting peace and order can never be attained at the expense of liberty, which consists in the voluntary self-determination of man by the inner reason, without any exterior coercion and, at the same time, rests upon the acknowledgment of the equality of others and of the dignity and the inviolability of human individuality. Now, has our age cultivated these blessings? Not in the least! And, pray, how could it, since egoism, which dominates it, is the enemy of liberty, the enemy of peace, and the enemy of good order?

Egoism is the enemy of liberty. The very notion

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of egoism or inordinate self-love excludes liberty, and a mere glance at its two offsprings, the “modern State” and revolution, will remove every doubt from within us.

The “modern State” aims, it is true, at unity, but to the exclusion of variety, with the suppression of the liberty and the individuality of its members. Is this not true? To mention only one point, it is most evident that he who does not respect the conscience of man will also suppress the liberty of man. Conscience is the judgment whereby man himself applies to his life and conduct that which he recognizes to be in conformity with the highest, immutable principles, that is, with the moral law, as true and as just. But instead of these eternal principles the “modern State” sets itself up as the living law and deprives thereby each of its members of free self-determination and free choice.¹ Man

¹ “The living law,” writes Peter of Vinea, the celebrated chancellor of the Roman-Germanic emperor Frederic II, “the only absolute lord of the world is the emperor.” But Louis XIV says in his instructions to the Dauphin: “It is the will of God that subjects obey blindly the ruler. I am robbed of my glory if any gain such without me. Whatever comes within the sphere of the State, of whatever nature it be, belongs to us personally. The kings are absolute lords and have the right by nature to dispose freely and completely of all goods, whether they belong to the clergy or to seculars.” This is the language of every one who has separated himself from God who is the source of all liberty and of all right. Luther also expresses himself thus on religious grounds: “My word is the word of Christ; he who believes not as I believe, is

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who by his liberty as well as by reason is distinguished from the animal, becomes a born slave of the State; he belongs first to the State before he does to himself and to the entire society, destined to represent a magnificent intellectual organism, he is degraded to a rigid mechanism. But with organism unity in variety is likewise abandoned.

Hand in hand with the “modern State” goes the march of revolution. Both are twins of the same mother — self-interest.¹ In revolution we find “modern” liberty thoroughly embodied. It originates in the egoistic will which, possessed and carried away by pride, by sensuality, and by covetousness, is likened to an all-destroying and devour-damned.” Wittenb., II. f. 60. As an example we refer to the religious orders. From personal experience, says Lacordaire of modern liberty of conscience: “When, as a true friend of our age and born within its inmost heart, I asked it for the liberty to believe nothing, — it conceded this readily; when I asked for the liberty to make application for all positions and dignities — it refused it not; when I asked for the liberty to influence its fate by treating with juvenile exuberance the most serious questions, — it did not decline it; when I asked of it the means of the greatest enjoyment it considered it right and proper. But to-day, moved by the Spirit, which likewise animates this age, when I ask for the liberty to follow the inspirations of my faith, to claim nothing, to live poor and quietly with some friends animated by the same desire: to-day I find myself impeded, and were it necessary, one half of Europe would stand ready to suppress us.” *Œuvres*, I, 4 sqq.

¹ Modern absolutism is in fact nothing else than revolution upon moral grounds, as the real revolution is in the political order. Both have the same origin: the “ego”; the same end: upheaval; the same means: brute force.

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ing fire. The egoism of revolution effects a violent change of the constitution and the conditions of justice in its own favor, it destroys everything to satisfy itself, at the expense of others.¹ In fact, revolution does not even create a mechanism, for it destroys everything by tearing asunder the social bond which unites and firmly establishes society.

By the above we have at the same time established the fact that egoism is likewise *an enemy of peace and of good order*. How can man possibly find in his “ego” peace, since his heart is an abyss which nothing can fill? And how can peace reign in society if every member of it is entrenched in his “ego” and excludes every other center and aim? And how can the “modern State” establish peace and order after having abandoned the eternal principles of right, of justice, and of morality, which are the common property of individuals, of families, of peoples, and of States, and which has established itself upon its own “ego”? ² To speak amidst such principles

¹ In order not to be too diffuse I refer to Ketteler, *Liberty, Authority and Church*. Mainz, 1862. (German.)

² As long as such conditions last a so-called equilibrium of States is impossible and hope of peace only a deception. Not badly, though scarcely perceiving the real cause, Kant says: “A lasting universal peace, through the so-called balance of the powers of Europe is, like Swift’s house, which was so perfectly constructed by a master-builder according to all the laws of balance, that as soon as a sparrow sat upon it it fell — it was a mere phantom.” *Works*, VII, 227. (German.)

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of peace or order is mere irony. Peace, said a great intellect,¹ consists in this that everything and each occupies its proper place and, in consequence of this, attains rest within itself and with others. And precisely the abandonment of every strange peculiarity and of individuality is the great crime of the “modern State,” — the aim of revolutions. Both, the “modern State and revolutions” are therefore incapable of establishing peace or a new social order, for their domineering ideas in all executions and enterprises are purely destructive in principle. Their creations prove this fully. If the sole product of revolution is anarchy, then the creation of the “modern State” is tyranny and terrorism. But both, anarchy as well as tyranny, contradict human nature, therefore they cannot be the end of human effort, much less the desired perfection of humanity. To destroy a thing in its perfection — to complete the same thing in its perfection, these are two contradictory notions.

III. Christ is the center in the Catholic Church alone.

But where is Christ the center of unity? Where is He loved, where is He the very aim of all efforts? Evidently only there where Christ forms the foundation and where He perpetually dwells. But according

¹ St. Thomas, II. 2 q. 29.

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to our former explanation it is only in the Catholic Church, whose foundation and corner-stone Christ is, that He operates perpetually. Therefore, in her alone is He the center of unity, or, as the Apostle says, "the corner-stone." (Ephes. II, 20; I. Peter, II, 6.) But if this be so, then true progress, which leads in fact, as the name indicates, to perfection, is only possible in connection with the Catholic Church.

I believe that I can best establish this truth by answering an objection that you might justly urge against me: "Progress," so claims the objection, "has manifested itself often outside of the Catholic Church and the present age gives most convincing testimony hereof." But, I would answer, what does all progress presuppose? Most assuredly a civilized people, that is, a people which has learned to cultivate and to put those forces into practice which raise man above the animal, namely reason and the will. But was it not precisely the Catholic Church which has civilized the nations? If development of the intellect and the will, intelligence and morality, are the two necessary factors of civilization, then this development presupposes liberty of body and of soul.

But who is it that has secured this liberty, so indispensable to civilization and to all progress? Was it not the Catholic Church? Who but she, to

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mention only one country, has made Germany free? It is to the credit of her clergy that the yoke of slavery was broken, under which the majority of Germany's sons were suffering. Even German antiquity, and not only the Greeks and the Romans, considered the slave without any rights in regard to the master; he was considered a mere thing — a beast.¹ Aye, even the Roman Tacitus was shocked at the cruelty of the Germans toward their slaves.² And who was it that labored for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves? Who was it that really freed Germany? To the Catholic clergy alone belongs the credit that human and divine rights finally attained their victory. "If ever," so says the celebrated historian quoted below, "it was in her solicitude for the slave that the Catholic Church, which is the mother of nations, proved her heavenly origin. It is known the world over that as far back as Christian literature reaches, the clerics and the monks spoke, wrote, and labored against the abuse of slavery. The ancient world collapsed. German States arose, the slavery of millions remained . . . only gradually, by blow upon blow, by stone upon stone, could a better formation of

¹ You will find proofs of this in Gfroerer, *History of German Rights, in the middle ages*, edited by Dr. Weiss, Schaffhausen, 1866, 3ff., 10ff. (German.)

² *Germania*, c. 25.

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society be accomplished. And this was done along the lines which the clergy pursued.”¹

But of what use is liberty of the body, if that of the soul, liberty of conscience, is wanting? But herein the Catholic Church showed herself also the true mother. If in ancient times the ruling opinion prevailed that individuals only exist for society and for the State and that they belong wholly to the commonwealth, not as members, but as instruments; if our modern theoretical politicians have excogitated the notion that the individual becomes only a person through the State,² then the Catholic Church restored to us our personal dignity again, inasmuch as we, her members, no longer consider the end of our terrestrial existence to consist in the State, but we regard the State merely as a means of an higher aim, of a higher life. As a Catholic I no longer belong body and soul to the State, I am no longer determined by the State in thought, in will, and in actions, but by God, my end, the creator of liberty and its use. We are no longer merely citizens of the world, but we are above all “citizens with the Saints, and the domestics of God.” (Ephes. II, 19.) Therefore we can obey the State only in as far as it demands

¹ He who wishes to know what main levers the Church employs to alleviate the condition of the oppressed may read Gfroerer, pp. 11 sqq.; 23, 30, 43, 58, 74, 87, 112 sqq. (German.)

² Above pp. 104 and 110.

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nothing from us which is against the law of God, which is proclaimed to us through the Catholic Church. Should the latter occur, should the State demand anything from us in contradiction of the Catholic faith, then full liberty of conscience would come to the front, the total independence of the child of the Catholic Church — with the Apostles we would fearlessly respond to the State: “We must obey God rather than man.” (Acts V, 29.) Tell me, Brethren, have the citizens of the ancient republics ever made such use of their liberty? Do the defenders of the “modern” systems of States dare oppose the State by saying: I will not, for I can not.

This Christian spirit of the Church became evident even in the earliest days of the Church, no less than it is to-day. In fact, what men were more free than the Christian victims of self-sacrifice? In view of the most fearful powers of the earth, in view of the executioners, of the sword, and other instruments of torture of all kinds, they declared, ever conscious of their dignity: *Non possumus* — we cannot!¹ It is within your power to take our lives, but not our faith! What sublime liberty is contained in these words! But here we learn at the same time that the root of liberty and of the right of individuality is not selfishness nor egoism, — the egoistic man will not sacrifice his life for his convictions — the

¹ Acts of the Apostles, IV, 20. See Bautain, *Religion and Liberty*.

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root of liberty is God, the motive for the proper use of liberty is the sanctity of His law.

But if the Catholic Church already manifests herself herein as the mother of civilization, by having laid the foundation thereof through that liberty, in which even the beggar, even the defenseless woman, aye, the very slave feels himself free, then this becomes the more evident when we consider the condition of those countries which have not experienced the full influence of the Catholic Church, where she has not been the controlling principle.

Let us compare the East with the West. Both experienced in the course of time great convulsions, and both were at some time devoted to Christianity, but in such a manner, however, that in the East Catholic principles were weakly and vacillatingly inculcated, whilst in the West they rested upon deep and strong foundations. And what traces have the convulsions in both countries left behind? Did they share the same fate? "In the West the upheavals were many and frightful, chaos reigned everywhere and yet life and light broke through this chaos. Neither the barbarity of the nations which overran these countries and settled therein, nor the furious invasion of the Islam in the extreme fulness of his power were able to smother the germs of a rich and fruitful civilization. In the East,

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however, all things decayed and went to ruin. Nothing could be renewed, and yielding to the attacks of the battering ram, impotent against the West, all things collapsed.¹ The detriment that civil liberty sustained wherever the Catholic Church gained no foothold, is admitted even by those who are not adherents of this Church. Apostasy from the Catholic Church, the rock of liberty, has always and everywhere been followed by an increase of despotism and tyranny. This was especially the case wherever the Catholic Church, oppressed by cruel force, was forced to yield to Protestantism and the so-called reformation. “In the Catholic Church, with her head in Rome,” says a Protestant Englishman who was thoroughly familiar with the Protestant North, “there is a principle of opposition against unlimited force. But in the North the Lutheran Church is entirely subject and servile to civil power, and the entire northern population has lost its liberties ever since it changed its religion for a better (?) one.”² But these consequences to civil, social, and political liberty showed themselves not only in the Protestant North, but wherever apostasy from the Catholic Church was complete. Need we be surprised at this since after the apostasy from

¹ Balmes, *Protestantism and Catholicity Compared*, I, 130ff. (German.)

² Doellinger, *Church and Churches*, p. 63. (German.)

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the Catholic Church, the center of which is Christ, egoism became the domineering principle of all movements, the egoistical power of the State became the center of all religions?¹ Because God is the author and the promoter of liberty, as the so-called father of German speculation has said, therefore it can only, according to the general principle that preservation also pertains to the creator, be lawfully used in union with God and in dependence upon Him. If, therefore, the will, in which liberty is rooted, separates itself from God, then liberty, because outside of its order, degenerates into licentiousness, which, however, always contains within itself servitude. But this is not the natural condition. Just as the whole man is not by nature inclined toward sin, but to God, so, too, can free will, this distinctive feature of man, this most noble gift of God, be impossibly ordained for sin, it must rather attain, through the perfection of the entire man, its own perfection by being directed toward its common origin, to God.² If the ultimate perfection of all things consists in union with their origin, why should precisely the will be excluded from this law? But, if this be so, then it is evident that apostasy from the Catholic Church brings with it the loss of liberty, since God has made the acquisition

¹ See above Third Discourse, note 1, p. 95.

² St. Thomas, 3 dist. 12. 9. 2. a. 2.

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of union with Him dependent on joining the Catholic Church, as we have seen above.¹

Furthermore, those who attribute the influence upon civilization to some other cause than that of the Catholic Church, fail to consider that the work of civilization was everywhere completed at the time when the cause designated by them began to operate.² And if to-day we also find progress outside of the Catholic Church, then the Catholic Church is still the cause thereof. Aye, even that which is

¹ We must refrain, in order not to be too long, from considering any farther how the Catholic Church was in all spheres the mother and cultivator of civilization and culture; we must content ourselves with simply directing the reader to Hettinger: *Apology of Christ*, V. 176-534. (German) and to Balmes in the above quoted work.

² Pope Leo writes most appositely: "That Christian Europe civilized the barbarian people and led them from the condition of savagery to a life worthy of human beings, from superstition to truth, that it repelled victoriously the attacks of the Mahometans, that it stands at the head of civilization and was to all other nations a guide and a teacher in all things which beautify human life and tend to its ennoblement; that it created a vast number of institutions for the amelioration of human misery; that from it real liberty went forth into all directions; all this it owes, without the slightest room for contradiction, to the religion which gave it the impulse for such enterprises and stood nobly at its side in their execution." Encycl. on *Christian States* (II, 362). On the other hand, he points out that those nations, which did not receive the Evangelical Light show, in a measure, an appearance of noble culture, but that their civilization is really merely a phantom of the true, an empty name without any reality: "for sin makes nations miserable." (I, 8.) Compare also on culture and civilization the very excellent lecture of Dr. Oscar Steintz in "*Important Questions of the times in the light of Thomistic philosophy.*" 1903, p. 68-93. (German.)

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susceptible of proof and true in the doctrines of those who, under the name of “progress,” attack the Catholic Church, belongs to the Church and is borrowed from her and is by an influence of more than a thousand years of the Church, incorporated into the march of ideas of the modern world.¹ Every true progress of our age is, therefore, and who can deny this if he examines closely, a lasting effect of the Catholic Church. To understand this is it necessary that the hand of the sower be always visible there where we see the germs of progress and of civilization developing and propagating?

But how does the Catholic Church favor the two other blessings necessary for the perfection of humanity — peace and order? Since the Catholic Church aims at establishing peace between God and man, this peace must also extend itself over men among themselves, the more so since peace and order had long ago forsaken humanity. The Church had already accomplished that which the Greeks and the Romans had declared impossible: it had united

¹ Hettinger, V. p. 199ff. (German.) Balmes, in the above quoted work, has shown most conclusively that long before Protestantism, which loves to appear in the foundation of civilization and of progress, civilization had developed as much as it was possible, but that Protestantism led it into a false path and brought into the more recent nations uncalculable harm precisely through its principle of negation. The progress made, since the so-called reformation, was made not by it, but in spite of it.

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a number of nations by communion in one faith and of one worship, and by the all-embracing bond of one ecclesiastical organization into one commonly directed whole.¹ *If only Catholic principles had gained entrance everywhere the Church would have succeeded in banishing war from the face of the earth.* And, pray, how could this be otherwise, since Christianity in its complete development leads of itself to the fraternization of all Christian people in the preservation of their national independence, and, therefore, to consider all animosities among themselves as unlawful.² Whilst the Catholic Church converts the nations she unites them at the same time in one center in which all consider themselves brethren, in which there are neither Greeks nor barbarians, neither freemen nor slaves (Gal. III, 28), in which even prince and peasant meet as brethren, in which all divisions are set aside, all distinctions are removed in Christ Jesus. "I in them and Thou in me." He Himself says: "that they be made perfect in one." Though for the accomplishment of this it required a grand undertaking: our elevation to the highest attainable degree of relationship with the God-man, Christ Jesus; but Christ Himself accomplished this work, by making it possible for us, through accession into

¹ See above p. 97.

² Walter, *Canon Law*, 9 ed., p. 704. (German.)

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His mystical body, the Catholic Church, to become members of His body. Our whole supernatural life rests, as we have seen in the fifth discourse, upon our intimate union with Christ Jesus. But if we are members of one body, if we live in union with Him, must there not then reign but one mind in us? Most assuredly! The condition of the body and of the organism depends upon the soul that animates them; but the source of the life of this body is not a soul contaminated by original sin, but it is He who atoned for original sin, Christ Jesus. Because He is the soul of this body, therefore, this is also "without spot or wrinkle." (Ephes. V, 27.) Sin and disorder, discord and division cannot find place therein. The mind of the one source of life communicates itself to all members and organs, through this unity the liberty of the individual members, consequently also their peccability, is not abolished, since this body is not a natural whole, but the fulness of grace, which flows from this source of life into all members, has the task and the power to unite all in the unity of one mind, in the unity of thought and of effort. That which mere nature could not accomplish that grace has done.

Unity, peace and order among men rest, therefore, not on natural principles—in our actual state, corrupted by sin, egoism, the enemy of real unity, always appears—but they rest upon super-

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natural principles, upon our reunion with Christ Jesus. He alone can unite men among themselves who has reconciled them to God and who has removed the root of all discord — Christ Jesus.¹

How intimately nature and grace are here united? What nature strives at, but which, wounded by sin, owing to its present condition it cannot attain, that grace accomplishes — unity in diversity. Or is it possible that nature of itself, corrupted by sin, can attain this end? But Christ designates the unity which He establishes among men, as a proof of His divine mission: “I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and the world may know that Thou hast sent me.” (John XVIII, 23.) But how could He say this if this effect were within the power of nature?

But, if this be so, then the Catholic Church proves herself not only divine, but also, if I may so express myself, human. She consoles us not only in regard to eternal life, in the other world, — she does not exclude that which is human in this world — but she elevates and perfects it, aye, she advances humanity precisely in virtue of her supernatural aim, in a manner otherwise impossible and unattainable.² Just as grace does not destroy nature nor abolish it, but rather regulates and perfects it, so likewise

¹ See above pp. 51 and 59.

² This is even admitted by Montesquieu, *Espr. des lois*, XXIV, 3.

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is the Catholic Church not opposed to humanity and to human progress, but on the contrary, she is precisely the mother, and still to-day, the strong support of both. Only one thing she desires: to direct all efforts of men to the true center, to the God-man Christ Jesus, "by whom and in whom all things were created, who is before all, and by whom all things consist." (Col. I, 16, 17.) She is not opposed to progress — for this would be opposition to the effort which God has placed into human nature, which would be impossible; but she desires to establish order in love, order in all undertaking, by leading both back to the center, to Christ Jesus. Christ must reign over all — this remains ever the unchangeable law of the true order of the world. Since the Church inculcates this law always and everywhere, and, according to Lacordaire, subjects all as mildly as she does boldly, as quietly as she does powerfully, and as tenderly as she does irresistibly, to the yoke and the dominion of Christ, she not only accomplishes her aim: the restoration of the supernatural union of man with God; she not only follows the admonition of the Apostle: "that we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ" (Ephes. IV, 15), but she satisfies, at the same time, the natural craving of the human mind and heart, by uniting the intellect and the will with their origin, whence they proceeded, and

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she brings both within the rest, whither they are tending. Who would dare assert that this fact of the Catholic Church is a haughty challenge proposed to the world or a contempt of nature or of reason? Of all places in the world such language should be least heard in Europe which owes it to the Church alone that, after the hordes of barbarians had overrun it, it did not likewise find its ruin in barbarity.¹

Is not the Catholic Church, therefore, and just she alone, the perfecter of humanity, and just because she is the supernatural institution for its salvation? Is it not she who secures for it the threefold precious blessing of peace, of liberty, and of order, and with these — perfection?

Unity in diversity — herein consists, as we have

¹ But it is really ridiculous if there are some in Germany, which owed its former greatness and unity to the one common bond of the Catholic faith, whose fancy carries them above the Catholic Church. All the great discoveries of the Germans emanated from Catholic priests and monks; the foundation of the present state of science was laid by the former monastic schools and, which is too much disregarded, the scientific renown of many of the present-day scholars is only the result of the manuscripts, "which after the suppression of the monasteries, were gathered (into State Libraries)." (Preface to the Vth vol. Catalog. Cod. MSS. bibl. reg. Monac.). Even the German language owes its scientific worth to the Dominican Master Eckhart, since the Catholic Church influenced it in general, in history as well as in language, by creating them anew and by giving them new life. (See Raumer, *Influence of Christianity upon the Old High German language*, Stuttgart, 1845.)

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seen, the great law of the whole of nature; herein we discovered the perfection and the end of the desires of humanity. Through the Catholic Church the end is attained; it is attained by means of the source of life that dwells within her — Christ Jesus. What an exalted idea do we not gather of our holy religion “since we regard it as the great and firm center around which the moral world moves, whilst it itself remains immovable, or rather, as the image of Him who gave it — the all-embracing medium, in which all else moves, grows, and decreases, rises and disappears! We are forced to consider it as the last resort of all thought, as the bond of the visible and the invisible, of that which has been revealed and of that which is to be investigated, as the solution of all objections and as the settling of all problems of exterior nature and of the soul within, as the firm and constant element of every science, as the aim and end of all reflection,”¹ as the very perfection of humanity.

Brethren, we have arrived at the conclusion of our discourses. During the course of these the Catholic Church has revealed herself to us as that institution which during all past centuries has never changed her task: to direct all men to their super-

¹ Wiseman, *Relation between Science and Revelation*, p. 583. (German.)

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natural destiny. She alone can accomplish this, for she alone has Christ Jesus, the center of the supernatural order of the world, as her inmost source of life. Now, what do these truths, considered in all these discourses, demand of you? Christians! that you become Catholics again. Though humanity may have proposed for its happiness diverse aims, but one is the true and right one: The eternal vision of God in Heaven, which we can only attain through the Catholic Church. Outside of that Church there is no salvation,¹ not only not the eternal, but not even the temporal, because the supernatural does not destroy the natural, for she is the rock of lib-

¹ According to Tertullian and other Fathers of the Church, the Church is the ark of safety, prefigured by the ark of Noah. St. Cyprian says: "He cannot have God for a Father who has not the Church for a mother." (*De unitate Eccles.* c. 6.) Origenes says: "Nemo seipsum decipiat: extra hanc domum, id est extra Ecclesiam nemo salvatur. Nam si quis foram exierit, mortis suae ipse fit reus." (In lib. *Jesu Nave*, hom. 3, n. 5). St. Augustin writes: "Ad ipsam vero salutem ac vitam aeternam nemo per-venit, nisi qui habet caput Christum. Habere autem caput Christum nemo poterit, nisi qui in ejus corpore fuerit, quod est Ecclesia." No one can attain salvation and eternal life unless he have Christ as his head. But no one can have Christ as head except he who is incorporated into His Body, which is: The Church. (*De unit. Eccl.* c. IX. n. 49). For the saving of life in the days of the flood presence in the ark was necessary, thus likewise union with the Body of Christ — our Head — through and in the Church is necessary. Actual and corporal presence in the ark was necessary then, now however, those who are ignorant of the Church of God can be saved, though not actually in the Church, provided they are therein, at least, in "desiderio" — in desire, which must be at least implicit. — Note of the translator.

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erty, of peace, and of order, of culture as well as of morality.

Do you ask for a proof of this? Tell me, why is there a tendency to-day of morals and of opinions towards paganism? The nations are being turned away from the Catholic Church and in her from their center, — Christ Jesus, who alone is able to renew and to reform humanity and who is the principle of progress and of perfection. And why is our modern society more like a disordered coil than a well-ordered, harmonious whole toward which man naturally strives? The nations are turned away from the Catholic Church and through her from their center, Christ Jesus, who is the sole mediator between God and man, the true center of union between men among themselves. The Catholic Church is banished into the sacristy, her influence upon society is checked. But Christ is also banished into heaven and has become to the great masses of Christians even — a strange God.

Who will be able to drag humanity out of this marsh of moral and intellectual rottenness? Aye, let us rather ask — is it possible to renew modern society? When the Western empire, through its inner corruption, approached nearer and nearer to its ruin God could replace the old, worn-out races by fresh and unspoiled tribes of people, in order to erect upon the ruins of the ancient and pagan

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world a new world of the Christian era.¹ But, at present, where are those fresh and uncorrupted tribes of people? And that the present humanity needs transformation, of this there can be no doubt. But will God admit a sudden transformation of morals? But God will not permit us to escape from this marsh of corruption without our co-operation. He will scourge us with a storm, as He does the ocean, before the Catholic Church will begin to unfold her activity to her fullest extent. But to do this, to send us some violent storm, He need send neither deluge upon the earth nor a rain of fire and sulphur from heaven. He need only permit the passions — which, as we have seen in our past discourses, threaten to unchain themselves according to the teachings of infidelity — to have a free course, and we shall empty to the very dregs the cup of God's holy anger.²

But, precisely therefore, let us take courage, Brethren, and be most firmly convinced that the future belongs to the Catholic Church. She is the only vigorous society, because like the olive tree described by Sophocles,³ "she is a plant not planted by human hand, but by creative wisdom, terrible

¹ Compare Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*, I, p. 63. German ed.

² Ketteler, *The Great Social Questions of the Day*, p. 63. (German.)

³ Oedip. 694.

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to her enemies and so firmly rooted that no one, either in ancient nor in modern times, is capable of uprooting her.”¹ And because of this divine property she carries within her, to-day as well as of old, a world-renewing power.

If, therefore, Brethren, we see many, in spite of this most evident truth, take offense at the Catholic Church? if we are the sad witnesses of the apostasy of so many of our friends and acquaintances, let us remain steadfast, let us be firm, *for the future belongs to the Catholic Church!* And if the Church, in view of the great indifference, aye, of the hatred which to-day many of the nations and governments bear towards her, should ask us with her divine founder: “Will you also leave me?” — then let us at once cry out with St. Peter: “To whom shall we go? Thou alone hast the words of eternal life.” (John VI, 68, 69.) Thou art our mother who has not only given us our body, which will return to the earth, but also that higher life, in virtue of which, upon a time, we shall partake of the eternal glory of Christ. And that which now, with God’s grace, is evident to us—let us hope, that also the enemies of the Catholic Church may soon be able to perceive. Aye, when they shall see the vanity of their actions and of all their efforts, when they shall have wandered away far enough into their error

¹ Wiseman.

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and find themselves deceived in their intentions and endeavors, then they will hasten back again to Christ Jesus, the inmost life of the Catholic Church, — and in her they will find what they have sought in vain outside of her: — liberty, peace, and order!





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